

2 HOME NEWS

As morale ebbs, bitter miners abandon the industry by the thousand

Redundancies help British Coal towards jobs target

■ A disillusioned exodus from threatened and unthreatened pits is taking place against a background of record productivity

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITISH Coal's chances of achieving its politically sensitive 30,000 job cuts have been boosted by thousands of miners taking voluntary redundancy rather than awaiting the outcome of the government's review of the planned pit closure programme.

But the new figures on voluntary redundancy came at the same time as warnings of more than 4,500 specific job losses among mining supply companies were issued by a leading manufacturing trade union and as miners hit a productivity record.

British Coal is keeping a running tally on the number of miners applying for voluntary redundancy since it announced last month the closure of 31 pits. So far, a total of 4,600 miners have either left the coal industry since then, or are in the process of doing so, according to the corporation.

The number amounts to almost one-tenth of British Coal's workforce, though BC managers doubt that this level can be sustained as unemployment nationally continues to rise.

The largest number of applications for redundancy came immediately after BC's closure announcement on October 13 with the loss of 30,000 miners' jobs. The public outcry which followed it led to the government agreeing to hold the closure of ten pits immediately threatened and to review the entire decision.

Those who have applied for voluntary redundancy come from mines across the country, and not just the pits threatened with closure. Some managers are believed to be among those who have opted to leave the industry before the government completes its review of the pit closures.

The National Union of Mineworkers said it was not surprised at the level of applications for voluntary redundancy, since miners were saying they were "fed up" with the coal industry.

The NUM said: "Morale is low and many miners just want to get out rather than wait for the outcome of the

review." Last week Arthur Scargill, NUM president, said British Coal was "blackmailing" miners into accepting redundancy.

British Coal said yesterday WED that miners had hit a new productivity record. Output last week averaged 6.72 tonnes of coal per man-shift — the best in the industry's history. BC said that efficiency levels were now 16 per cent higher than this time last year. At the Selby group of pits in North Yorkshire, productivity hit a new peak of 12.25 tonnes.

In addition to the government's internal review of the pit closures, the Commons' employment and industry select committee yesterday WED the AEEU engineering union warned that more than 4,500 jobs were directly at risk among even a small range of mining-related manufacturing companies.

CUA union leader claimed yesterday that closing one of Britain's two remaining naval dockyards would not save a penny until well into the 21st century and would lead to a "second great Coal Board disaster", with tens of thousands of job losses in areas already hard-hit.

The defence ministry, environment department and the Scottish office all wanted the yards at Devonport in Plymouth and Rosyth in Scotland to remain open, leaving the Treasury as the only government department calling for one to close, said union spokesman Jack Dromey.

"Keeping both yards open will be highly cost effective," said Mr Dromey, national secretary of the TGWU transport union. "Such are the costs of closing a dockyard that not one penny would be saved until at least 2010."

The government is expected to make a decision before Christmas on which yard is to be awarded future nuclear submarine refitting work. Mr Dromey added: "The absurdity of the Treasury telling the MoD simply to concern itself with value for money out of the defence budget must end."



Show of frustration: miners rally outside the TUC general council's meeting in Doncaster

Pitmen quit before the cash runs out

By PAUL WILKINSON

FRED Thompson took the money and ran because he felt he could no longer trust the government or anyone else in charge of Britain's coal industry. That, and the fact that at 50 he would be able to draw a pension, made it simple for the pit deputy to end a mining connection that has spanned three generations of his family.

"I chose to get out while there was definitely a bit of extra money going," he said. "I was told by British Coal that I would get an extra £10,000 on top of my redundancy settlement. Everyone is so frightened they will go back on their word, so I wanted to get in before they changed their minds about the incentive."

Mr Thompson left the Vane Tempest colliery at Seaham in the Durham coalfield three weeks ago, after 34 years down the mine. "I felt I couldn't believe in anyone, particularly not the coal board or the government. There was no one left I could trust. There's no mistake they are giving all that money away to clear people out. It made sense to me to take it. It wasn't a difficult decision to take. I have my pension to fall back on. I am in Nacods (the pit deputies' union) and I can draw my pension right now, but I wouldn't have been able to if I had been in the NUM."

The future looks bleak for the 936 workers at Vane Tempest. Geological difficulties meant that it was earmarked for shutdown even

before its instant closure was announced in last month's review. Its coal faces are under the North Sea, up to six miles away from the pit bottom, and seaboard test drilling for new reserves was costing up to £1 million a borehole.

Now it is working through the 90-day consultation period, but Mr Thompson is convinced it will not reopen. One week after the brief reprieve, all coal production was halted and miners were ordered to clock on each day before being sent home on full pay.

He said: "It is easy to be wise after the event, but I am glad that I have taken redundancy now. I am certain that I would have had to after the review. I feel sorry for the youngsters. I would love to see all these pits

stay open, but I can't see the review making a hair's breadth of difference."

He sees little point in looking for a job in an area where one in five adults is out of work. "I know I will never get another job, certainly not in this town. I have looked at the job centres and all I see are positions for taxi drivers and security men. Who can afford a taxi when everybody's out of work?"

He plans to spend his time fishing and walking and to live off his pension and the money his wife, Moyra, brings home from her part-time job at a local school. They have one child, Lisa, 13. "We shall just have to make do with what we have," he said. "I am one of the lucky ones because I had the pension."

Beckett says plan to freeze MPs' pay is a smokescreen

By ROBERT MORGAN AND JONATHAN PRYNN

THE government's proposal to freeze MPs' pay next year was condemned by Labour last night as a sham and a sham. Margaret Beckett, the party's deputy leader, said it was another example of the government's incompetence.

The pay freeze for MPs, she said in the Commons, was not to set an example to the rest of the public sector, but as a stalking horse. MPs were being used to set a precedent

for a pay freeze that she deplored. Under the proposals set out by Tony Newton, Leader of the Commons, members will have their pay frozen at £30,854. The parliamentary salary of ministers and those who receive a second salary, such as the Speaker and the Leader of the Opposition, would be frozen at £23,227 a year.

For years, MPs' pay has been linked to a Civil Service grade. After next year's freeze, Mr Newton explained, a new formula will have to be devised because the grade in question had disappeared. He made clear that he intended to re-establish a clear link with Civil Service pay. "We shall return to the position for 1994 and beyond, when the position is clearer," he did not wish to return to MPs' deciding their own pay every year.

He said that the government did not intend that MPs should forgo a pay increase that would have been had they had. For 1992 they had had 3.9 per cent, paid in August, and in normal circumstances that would have carried through to MPs. The government did not accept that MPs should be permanently disadvantaged by 3.9 per cent.

Defending the pay freeze, Mr Newton said that restraint in current expenditure was

necessary for resources to be directed towards capital projects. It was right for the government and House to give a lead in exercising restraint.

Mrs Beckett said the pay freeze was no part of a coherent policy for pay, not even in the public sector. "Like most of the things this government turns its hand to, it is a mess," she said. "It is not a policy, it is a smokescreen. The government have announced a wholly arbitrary limit for public-sector pay and they hope, by including MPs in its provisions, to create the illusion of fairness and the impression that the higher paid are taking their fair share, a concept usually wholly absent from their thinking or policy."

Alf Morris, Labour MP for Manchester, Wythenshawe, put forward an amendment on behalf of the trustees of the members' pension fund to provide that MPs leaving the Commons within the next two years should receive a pension based on what their salary would have been had they not been subject to a pay freeze. But he allowed the amendment to fall after hearing assurances from Mr Newton.

Mr Newton, a former pensions minister, said there was a danger that MPs would pay substantial extra contributions and get no return.

Boy dies in police car crash

A BOY whose family fled as refugees from war-torn Somalia three months ago died yesterday after he was struck by a police car on its way to investigate a suspected mugger.

Muhammad Abdul Quadir, 12, is believed to have jumped over a safety barrier and into the path of the patrol car on a dual carriageway near his home in Moss Side, Manchester, early yesterday morning.

A policewoman from the car used mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in an attempt to revive the boy, but he died later in hospital.

Speaking through an interpreter, the boy's father, said: "We have great sadness in our family. The whole Somali community is sharing our sadness."

He said: "We know the problems of war, killings and tragedies. Our house was destroyed and we had to sell all our belongings to escape."

Between 150,000 and 300,000 people are thought to have died of starvation, disease and fighting in nearly two years of clan war and drought in Somalia.

Chief Supt Andrew Glaister said last night that the police car was a back-up vehicle and had not been involved in a pursuit.



Home cooking wins by a nose

"This," said Dr John Blackburn (C-Dudley W) "is essentially a domestic debate." As if to underline the point, Terry Dicks (C-Hayes & Harlington) had just risen to interrupt the debate on a point of order.

"Madam Deputy Speaker," he said, "there's a smell of cooking coming from underneath the bench where I sit. Do we now have to cook our own meals? Could you arrange for something to be done? This smell of egg and bacon and fried bread is rather appetising."

Arranged in a splendid purple robe in the Chair, Dame Janet Fookes looked about as unlikely a bed and breakfast landlady as it would be possible to imagine, and told Mr Dicks she was not sure there was much she could do about his complaint.

His interruption confirmed the judgement that this was, indeed, a domestic debate. MPs were deciding their salaries. This delicate task has placed them in a quandary. MPs' pay is pegged to a middle-ranking grade in the civil service. The government is putting a squeeze on civil servants' pay. Parliament has voted to approve this. So (you think) it is natural that MPs should apply the same medicine to themselves.

But of course Opposition MPs never agreed to the public sector pay policy. So why should they now vote for a squeeze on their own salaries? Yet, if they vote against a squeeze, and launch a lifeboat to rescue parliamentarians alone, what would the electorate think? Labour MPs scratch their heads and ponder the likely tabloid headlines: "I'M OK COMRADE" — above a photograph of some rich leftwinger's villa in Spain.

So when, from the Opposition front bench, Margaret Beckett declared graciously that as others might wish to speak she would curtail her remarks, you could see why. She allowed herself just enough time to describe the plans as a mess, a smokescreen, a stalking horse, and all that thought-out shambles; omitted to advise on how to clean up the mess, clear the smoke, tether the stalking horse or construct a well thought-out shambles; and sat down. So much for a lead from the front bench.

Joe Ashton (Lab, Bassetlaw) did at least bring a proposal of his own. "I would be happy to accept a freeze," he said, "if the extra could be paid instead to a charity." Of course that is exactly what Norman Lamont has arranged, the nominated charity being HM Treasury, but Mr Ashton suggested his own preference: "Oxfam, for instance," he said.

The idea was not taken up by other members. A pity. Why not let them choose? One can imagine, for instance, the rolling figure of Nicholas Soames (C-Crawley) redirecting his pay increase to the Crawley and Horsham Hunt, while Scottish minister Michael Forsyth, whose daughter keeps puff-adders, might pledge his bonus to the national snake-fanciers' benevolent society. Dennis Skinner could nominate the Wat Tyler memorial anti-fascist league (Clay Cross section). Patrick Cormack (C, Stuffs S) could send his increase straight to the Queen to help with her new sideboard, and Roy Hattersley could pitch in with support for Soho's threatened L'Escargot restaurant.

I was not to be. Dr Blackburn had a more sobered suggestion. Confronted with the fact that he would be asked to explain the circumstances when an MP dies in office (Dr B put it more grandiloquently, representing death as a kind of personal sacrifice voluntarily undertaken) couldn't every other MP have £20 taken off his pay packet, and the accruing £50 K20, £13,000, sent to the widow?

Dr Blackburn put his case affecting, and became himself, so moved by his own speech that he concluded by vowing "never to lay down the sword of my argument" until it had prevailed. Others were not so sure.

Sitting behind Dr Blackburn, Mr Dicks was still troubled by the eggs and bacon. I wonder whether he knows of an incident, many years ago, in which a CS gas bomb was let off in the Chamber.

An MP at that time, Sir John Foster, unaware of the source of the crippling fumes but sure he recognised them, complained to the Sergeant at Arms about smells from the House of Commons kitchen.

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Moscow. The spokesman for Signor Fontana said he did not exclude the government deciding to support a French veto "but that does not mean this will happen necessarily."

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French threaten veto

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Rail delays likely after London rush-hour crash

By BILL FROST

RAIL services into London could still be disrupted this morning after yesterday's collision between two trains outside London Bridge station in the morning rush-hour.

Twenty people were injured when the 7.15am train from Charing Cross to Tunbridge Wells and the 5.00am from Ramsgate to Charing Cross, packed with commuters, collided just before 7.30am.

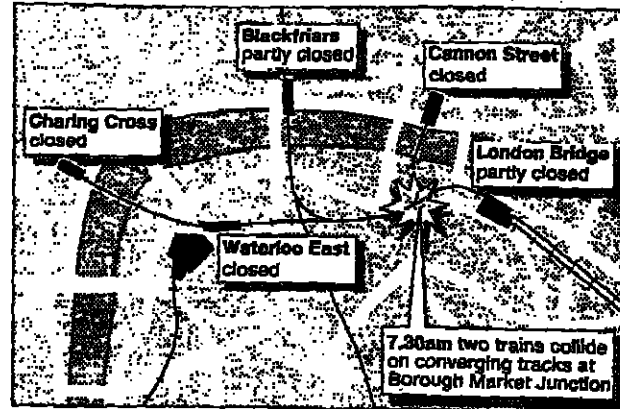
Five people were treated at the scene and seven others were admitted to Guy's Hospital with cuts, bruising and shock. A London Ambulance Service paramedic at the scene said the injuries were mercifully light.

The accident happened at the Borough Market junction in south London — a key link in the busy suburban system and on a stretch where tracks converge. Passengers had long delays as BR closed Charing Cross, Cannon

Street, Waterloo East, parts of Blackfriars and London Bridge stations. Charing Cross and Waterloo East remained closed last night.

The two trains, one of which was badly damaged, would have been under the control of London Bridge signal box at the time of the crash. Geoff Harrison-Mee, divisional director of the region and a passenger on the London-bound train, said: "In theory [the accident] should not have been possible because this is a very modern signal box which operates a safe service."

Mr Harrison-Mee, still looking shaken after the collision, described the moment of impact: "We were just leaving the station when there was a loud bang and an electrical short circuit. The lights went out and flying glass began coming into the carriage. The window had shattered and I could see another train very



very close. Our train was travelling between 15mph and 20 mph at the time of the collision. I think the other one may not have been moving."

Network SouthEast said: "It was not a head-on crash, more of a glancing blow. Neither of the trains was derailed. NSE will be starting an enquiry into the accident as will the Department of Transport."

John Prescott, shadow

transport secretary, said he was concerned at the number of rail collisions in the past 10 years. "I am also increasingly alarmed that British Rail is not making any advance towards implementing automatic train stopping, which is essential for safety," Mr Prescott suggested that John McGregory, the transport secretary, should concentrate his mind not on privatisation, but

on modernisation of the railways and safety.

A planned inauguration of Network SouthEast train was called off after the accident. Mr McGregory was to have unveiled the new "state-of-the-art" rolling stock at Cannon Street station yesterday morning. However, such was the disruption as railmen worked to clear the line at London Bridge that the inauguration was postponed, possibly for as long as a month.

Networker trains, which have sliding rather than slamming doors, are to be introduced on Kent suburban services in an attempt to improve performance and reduce commuter dissatisfaction. They are said to be more efficient and cheaper to run than existing rolling stock.

Mr Harrison-Mee commented ruefully: "We have waited four years for the Networker. What a day for this accident to happen."

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Estimates vary wildly because 'personal' treasures belong by custom to the nation

Royal fortune clouded by public confusion and private discretion

By Christopher Elliott and Angela Mackay

LESS than half a dozen people know the true extent of the Queen's personal wealth. Neither select committee nor probing journalist has ever penetrated the discretion of royal advisers and acts of Parliament designed to prevent a breach.

The most recent royal comment on estimates that she was worth £6.5 billion came earlier this week from Prince Edward: "Absolute crap! If only she had £6.5 billion."

That figure arises from an estimate of her wealth as head of state and includes such things as the crown jewels, which are, inalienably, the property of the nation. Her private, disposable wealth is considerably less, and considerably more difficult to estimate, as much as she "owns" may not belong to the nation by law but has certainly done so by practice.

The Leonardo drawings at Windsor are hers, but constitutional experts regard it as inconceivable that she would not pass them on to her heir. Putting a price on them is even more difficult. As works of art they are valuable enough but as works of art being sold by the Queen they would fetch even more.

A further difficulty is the depth of feeling in certain areas of society against even posing the question. Yesterday the art world was reluctant to assist in setting values for specific works, saying that the exercise was "erroneous", "academic" and "vulgar", as her paintings would never be sold.

The strong backbench pressure for a new formula and public scrutiny of the Queen's private income was given fresh impetus by her Guildhall speech, widely perceived as an olive branch to the lobby that believes she should pay income tax. "You need to know how much is really needed," one member of the public accounts select committee said

■ With public scrutiny of royal finances increasing, putting a figure on the Queen's personal wealth is fraught with difficulties

yesterday. "At the moment, there is no clear division between the civil list and personal income."

Philip Hall, author of a book published this year that went further than any before in detailing the royal family's wealth, said: "The reason why the public is entitled to know the size of the Queen's personal fortune is because they can then determine the size of her tax exemption, which is a public subsidy."

Her tax-free personal wealth breaks down roughly into three areas: investments, property, and those works of art the Queen may feel free to dispose of should the need arise. There is also an income of about £3 million a year from the Duchy of Lancaster which goes to the Queen's Privy Purse, the private fund that pays for expenditure not covered by the civil list.

The value of her investment portfolio has been put at less than £50 million and as high as £450 million. Most sums are arbitrary. They are based on evidence given by Lord Cobbold, a former Lord Chamberlain, to a select committee in 1971. He said that stories of private investments of between £50 to £100 million were "wildly exaggerated".

Using this equation, the Queen undoubtedly has capital of more than £100 million invested in shares and securities but she pays scant attention to the details of her investment strategy. Several leading City houses manage the portfolio using a conservative, discretionary trading programme designed to protect the capital and provide an income.

The Queen's investments are not declared in her name on company registers but held in a specially created com-

pany, Bank of England Nominees, established under the Companies Act 1976 to house shares bought by heads of state and foreign governments. A check on the share registers of several blue chip companies produced the name Bank of England Nominees. While the secret investor could be the Sultan of Brunei or the Mexican government, the most common user of the nominee company is believed to be the Crown, so it is likely that the 254,000 shares in Whitbread, the 476,138 British Petroleum shares and the stakes in Barclays, Unilever and numerous others are owned by the Queen.

Some estimates have placed the value of her artworks at about £200 million and some have gone as high as £9 billion. It is impossible to get an accurate figure on the whole collection.

The value of her estates, which includes Sandringham and Balmoral, has taken a tumble in the property slump. The market for grand country houses, known as trophy estates, has been the worst affected. It may be that the property is now worth about £70 million.

Whether the Queen's personal fortune is £250 million or £1 billion we may never know, despite the best efforts of the disclosure lobby. For now, secrecy prevails, as Walter Bagehot hoped it would 125 years ago. "[The monarch's] mystery is his life," he wrote. "We must not let in daylight upon magic."

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THE QUEEN'S WEALTH - FROM BLOODSTOCK TO THE STOCK MARKET



The Queen's art collection is valued at between £150-200 million but the 'royal' factor would ensure a much higher value in the unlikely event that any works are sold. The Royal Collection includes Vermeer's 'A Lady at the Virginals', which alone could be worth over £30 million, and Holbein's 'Portrait of Desiderius Erasmus', worth an estimated £20 million.



Shares and securities owned by the Queen are worth between £50-150 million and managed by several leading City houses including Cazenove and Co and Rowe and Pitman. What is bought in her name is protected from prying eyes by statute. However, she is likely to hold a wide range of portfolio of shares including BP, Unilever and Barclays.



Property owned by the Queen is estimated to be worth between £80-100 million. This includes the 50,000-acre Balmoral estate, 21,000 acres at Sandringham and a 7,600-acre grouse moor. Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace are held by the Queen as Head of State and are not part of her own personal wealth.



The Queen owns two stud farms, at Sandringham and Wolverton, which together have a total of around 24 brood mares and 20 foals and yearlings. Jorjy with Lord Howard de Walden, she is the largest British owner of a private stud farm. This racing season the Queen has 30 horses in training, including Colour Sergeant, a winner at Royal Ascot.

Wealth is shrouded in secrecy

By Our Foreign Staff

THE crowned heads of Europe are among the richest men and women in the world, though their wealth, more often lies in land and palaces than in tangible assets.

Details of their private fortunes are rarely published, however, and few of today's monarchs are taxed as ordinary citizens.

Apart from the Queen, the richest by far is Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands. Her personal fortune is estimated at £3.3 billion, tied up in securities, art, jewellery and property. Income from these assets is

Editors underwhelmed by speech

By Brian MacArthur

WHEN Fleet Street wants to sneer at the Queen, the corniest but classic trick for the sub-editors who have to write the headlines is to resort to the use of One—as in One is not amused. On Tuesday, the Queen set another poser for the tabloids when she resorted to Latin to describe 1992 as her *annus horribilis*.

The Sun, where such classic Fleet Street headlines as 'Gotchal, Freddie Starr! Ale My Hamster and Paddy Panto-down were crafted, translated the Queen's message into three short headline words, all in English. "One's Bum Year" in The Sun left the

THE PRESS

Daily Mirror limping with "One is doing One's Best".

Yet the Queen cannot have been amused yesterday when she studied Fleet Street's treatment of her speech. She must have realised yet again that she and her advisers had somehow failed to strike the right chord, at least for the Fleet Street editors at whom much of the speech, described as "self-abasing" by The Independent, must have been aimed. We do sympathise, of course we do, said the Daily Mail. It was impossible not to be moved. But there was a growing public disinclination

to support the royal family.

One tabloid editor said that she had been right to acknowledge the criticisms, but the debate about the royal family was unlikely to go away and the speech would be seen as so much hot air. Opulence was not the taste of the nineties. James Whitaker of the Daily Mirror, a royal reporter for 18 years, thought that the Queen had been ill-advised and the speech ill-judged. What she did not say—about Windsor Castle, her family and the thousands who had lost their homes and their jobs—betrayed insensitivity. Never complain, never explain might still be the best motto.

Rape case doctor 'likes wild women'

By A Staff Reporter

A GYNAECOLOGIST accused of rape and indecent assault spoke yesterday of his attraction to "wild" and sexually assertive women.

Dr Thomas Courtney, 46, was giving evidence on the sixth day of his trial at the Central Criminal Court. He denies raping two women and indecently assaulting two others at his consulting rooms in Harley Street, central London.

He said that he went on a blind date to a dinner party with the first alleged rape victim—Miss A. The party was being held by a patient who was engaged to an instructor in the Territorial Army, he said.

Dr Courtney explained that he had been interested in doing medical work in the TA and had spoken to the couple about it. They had invited him to dinner and "volunteered" him to give Miss A a lift.

He went on: "I was interested in meeting wild women who went on weekends in the Territorial Army. I asked what sort of girl Miss A was. I was told she was very vivacious and attractive. She knew what she wanted and was not backward in coming forward."

"I asked if she was sexually assertive, because I like women who are, and was told she was. I think I asked if she did the business."

Dr Courtney said: "I had been given the distinct impression if she found me attractive she would not have any reservation in making decisions about what she wanted to do."

He said that he had made love twice to Miss A on the night of the dinner party date. He denied spiking her champagne beforehand, as the prosecution has alleged.

Dr Courtney said that Miss A had sat on the window ledge while he took off his clothes and got into the shower. "I asked her if she wanted to join me. She smiled, drank some champagne, took out her earrings, took off her scarf and the rest of her clothes and got into the shower. I soaped her down front and back. She raised no objection. She turned round for me to wash her back. There was a lot of kissing and cuddling—we had intercourse."

The trial continues today.

Palace never takes first step

By Alan Hamilton

HOWEVER great the public pressure on the Queen to contribute to the restoration of Windsor Castle, she is unlikely to initiate any action herself. Constitutional monarchy means the sovereign does only what her advisers tell her, and her principal advisers are her elected ministers—the government.

Her closest adviser and confidant is her private secretary, Sir Robert Fellowes, an urbane and courtly man of the old school who is married to the Princess of Wales's sister. He will not counsel the Queen on any major decision until he has talked to Downing Street, but the central question is: in any such discussions, who has the upper hand?

A delicate balance exists between the two seats of power. If the Queen has a strong view on an issue, she is more than capable of making it known, and the prime minister of the day undoubtedly listens. No government has ever

dared to suggest to the Queen that she pay tax; if the Queen feels that public opinion now demands such a move, she will discreetly hint to the prime minister that she is willing to do so.

Government demands which appear to threaten the monarch's position have in the past been seen on both sides of the House as vote-

losers, but the climate may now be changing. Some have suggested that what the monarchy really needs is a public relations professional, but such an approach has always been anathema to the Queen. Buckingham Palace press office, currently headed by the able Charles Anson, late of Downing Street, the diplomatic service and a City merchant bank, has traditionally mounted a purely defensive operation.



Fellowes: the Queen's closest confidant



Anson: operating always on the defensive

Garda claims success against IRA bombers

By Edward Gorman, Ireland Correspondent

IRISH detectives believe they may have made a significant breakthrough in a joint operation with Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch to counter an IRA Christmas bombing campaign in Britain.

Security sources in Dublin disclosed yesterday that recent raids in Dublin and Limerick had uncovered important documents relating to the campaign as well as parts for bombs thought to be intended for use in London.

One Irish detective was reported as saying that the raids, which may have seriously disrupted the provisionals' supply lines, were the biggest breakthrough by the Irish police against the IRA in years. "Their entire campaign in England has been compromised," he said.

Scotland Yard refused to comment on the disclosures or on the possibility that the leaking of details of the operation to a Dublin journalist may jeopardise follow-up operations in Britain. A spokesman said it was entirely a matter for the Irish police.

According to reports in Dublin, detectives from the intelligence and security branch raided a flat in the south side of the city last Friday. They found components for bombs, including timing devices and detonators, and several documents giving details of arms and explosives dumps in Britain.

This raid was followed by a similar one on a flat in Limerick which also turned up documents and parts for bombs. The information is thought to have been passed to Scotland Yard.

There was speculation, however, that the up to 20 IRA members thought to be active in Britain, alerted by colleagues in Ireland, would have moved quickly to pre-empt any police activity after the raids.

The Garda operation was initially mounted several months ago in a co-ordinated attempt with British detectives to cut the IRA supply lines. There have so far been 14 bomb attacks in London since the beginning of October.

Brain cell transplants offer Alzheimer hope

By Jeremy Laurance, Health Services Correspondent

BRAIN cell transplants could become standard treatment for patients suffering from such conditions as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, a British specialist says.

Professor Edward Hitchcock was commenting on research successes with the technique. Patients with Parkinson's who had been unable to feed or dress themselves were able to lead normal lives without assistance after receiving transplants of brain cells from foetuses, according to three studies, two from America and one from Sweden, published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

A patient whose driving licence was taken away because of his disability regained it, and a nurse recovered her memory, improved ten points on the IQ scale and was able to use public transport again.

Refinements of the technique, pioneered five years ago, are producing bigger benefits and longer lasting results as researchers transplant larger quantities of

cells into different parts of the brain. The cells, obtained from foetuses aborted within the first three months of pregnancy, are injected through the skull. Because they are at an embryonic stage, they can "wire up" with the adult cells, compensating for those lost as a result of the disease.

In a leading article, the journal says that the procedure remains experimental but the results "will undoubtedly spur optimism". In one study, the transplant diminished symptoms in three quarters of the patients.

Professor Hitchcock, an expert in the technique at the Midlands Centre for Neurosurgery and Neurology in Birmingham, said: "There is increasing evidence that transplants may be of considerable value in the management of neuro-degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and Huntington's Chorea. Something like this, I'm sure, will become part of the treatment for these various diseases."

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4 HOME NEWS

Woman told listeners she was lonely

Teenager raped on date set up by radio

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A TEENAGER who telephoned a radio phone-in programme to say that she was lonely and "looking for someone in her life" was raped by a man with whom the presenter put her in touch.

Scotland Yard said that a man calling himself "Terror" lured the woman, 17, to a house where she was attacked by him and two other men after he answered her appeal on Choice FM, a 24-hour Afro-Caribbean music station in London. The woman's ordeal was disclosed yesterday as police appealed for information from a mini-cab driver who later drove her home.

A police spokesman said: "The victim telephoned a phone-in type radio programme and gave details of herself over the air. She described herself as lonely and looking for someone in her life. A number of people responded and she was given by the DJ the telephone number of the suspect."

The woman, then living in

Bromley, Kent, met the man on a blind date on November 16 and, after an evening out, was taken to a house in Stockwell, south London. She reported the assault the next day. Police have appealed for the mini-cab driver, who took her to Bromley at 3am, to contact them.

Choice FM said last night that it gave the woman "appropriate advice" before passing her the name of the man, having at first told her to go out with friends until she met the right man. A spokesman expressed the station's concern at the incident and extended its sympathies to the victim.

The station said in a statement: "At about 1.20am on November 16, a woman called in to make a dedication as part of a late-night show. It was not a lonely hearts programme but a music show where, between certain times, listeners were encouraged to call in with their dedications."

The caller said she wanted to meet a man and asked the

DJ to help her. He gave what we considered appropriate advice: that if she went out with her girl friends to the right places, she would soon meet a man she liked. The caller said she wanted to tell London about her situation and our DJ replied that, by calling his show, she had already done that.

"A few minutes later a man called and said he would like to leave his number for the previous caller. Our DJ said if he rang back later he would take the number and possibly pass it on to the previous caller, if she called back."

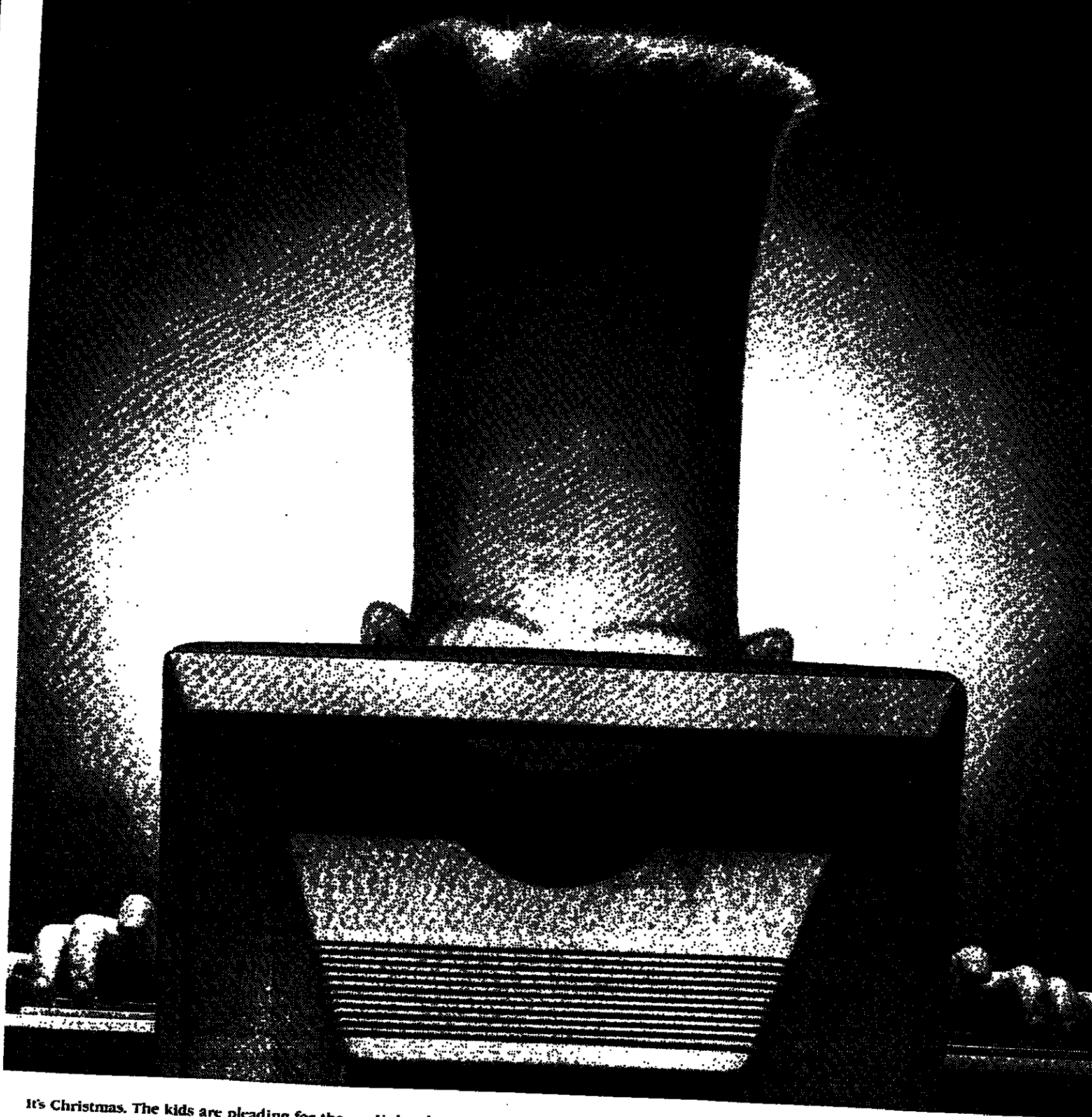
"She did call back and the DJ gave her the numbers of several callers who had enquired about her. He gave these numbers to her privately and warned her to be careful. The young woman arranged to meet one of these men and was subsequently raped and indecently assaulted."

The station kept the numbers of the callers and have given them to police.



Festive fare: Bob Maund checks mistletoe at a Christmas tree and holly auction at Tenbury Wells market, Hereford and Worcester

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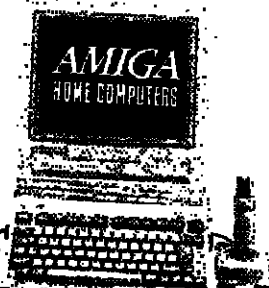
Enough, in fact, to go to any kid's head. And, as many are only half the price of a games console cartridge, you'll also be saving pots of money in the long term.

Indeed, the Amiga 600's astounding versatility, a starting price of only £299.99, plus our free one year home maintenance service has

made it far and away the best selling 16 bit computer in the world.

You can find out more by visiting any of the retailers below and picking up our leaflet on everything you need to know about buying a computer. Alternatively, you could give the kids a quick test drive.

Take it from us, if they don't already know how good the Amiga 600 is, you'll be seeing a few raised eyebrows.



BBC green paper wins praise from commercial rivals

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BROADCASTERS yesterday warmly welcomed the green paper on the future of the BBC, relieved that the government had taken a far more open-minded view about the corporation than the Thatcher government's "doctrine of approach" to ITV.

As the BBC prepares this afternoon to unveil its own 90-page blueprint for survival as an "efficient and accountable" public service broadcaster into the 21st century, commercial television and radio executives were quick to praise Peter Brooke, the heritage secretary, for his reasoned approach to the debate about the renewal of the BBC's royal charter in 1996.

The corporation will argue today that it should withdraw from areas where it cannot or need not make an original contribution; but not turn its back on popular programmes aimed at large audiences. It plans to occupy the high ground with innovative drama and comedy, and be the "guarantor of the national debate" with extensive news and current affairs coverage at peaktime. It is expected to move away from the more banal programmes.

Andrew Quinn, the new chief executive of ITV, said: "It is reassuring to see an understanding expressed that advertising revenue is finite and not able to fund the combined resources necessary to sustain the quality we have come to expect from both the BBC and ITV."

David Glenicross, chief executive of the Independent Television Commission, said: "The ITC welcomes the green paper as evidence of the government's open-mindedness and the attention paid to the impact of any decisions about the BBC on commercial television."

Peter Baldwin, chief executive of the Radio Authority, said it planned to issue a formal response in due course. But he said: "Our first impression is that it is a very open document."

Melvyn Bragg, the *South Bank Show* presenter who has won some notoriety in broadcasting circles by calling for the BBC to share licence fee money with its commercial rivals, yesterday welcomed the green paper as "a very good opening, discussion document". But he said he only wished that ITV had had the same opportunity. "This throws into relief the travesty of the legislation ITV suffered, which was doctrinaire dictated. This is undocrinaire. Lucky old BBC, good for them," he said.

Mr Bragg, LWT's controller of arts programmes, said that his "arts council of the airwaves" proposal was meant only as a "trade-off" should the BBC continue to eat into the advertising cake with new satellite services such as UK Gold and its collaboration with BSkyB over Premier League football.

"A lot of people inside the BBC and in government are distressed by the BBC taking advertising. Just last week UK Gold ran an ad saying now for the first time you can advertise with BBC programmes. This is why ITV and Channel 4 find themselves threatened. If the BBC wants to attack the advertising cake, then ITV should get a slice of the licence fee cake. If they withdraw from advertising they should get the whole of the licence fee forever and ever. I am a great friend of the BBC," he said.



Bragg: "Lucky old BBC, good for them"

Charities seek chief for lottery hand-outs

By RUTH GLEDHILL

A NEW body is needed to distribute the proceeds of the National Lottery to charities, according to a report published today. The lottery will be the largest single source of charitable funds, generating up to £250 million for charity, and no existing body has the capacity to distribute such a sum, the report says.

A lottery bill is expected to be published before Christmas, said the national lottery department, which is responsible for the national lottery. Royal assent could be given next summer, with tickets on sale in 1994.

Estimates of an annual lottery turnover range from £1.3 billion to £4 billion, with up to £1 billion available to spend on good

causes. The money is expected to be split between the arts, sport, heritage and charities. Some would be put into a millennium fund for large projects.

Voluntary sector income is £17 billion, including £3.5 billion donated by the general public. Lottery proceeds would represent between 0.5 per cent and 1.5 per cent of voluntary income, but even so the lottery would become the biggest grant-maker to UK charities.

The Association of Charitable Foundations report calls for a charitable board to be set up as an autonomous trust, with committees for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The board should emphasise poverty and social welfare in distributing money.

NEWS

husband clearing his bride

SEARCHING FOR a way to clear his name, a man who was accused of murdering his wife, has been cleared of the charge. The man, who was charged with the murder of his wife, was found not guilty. The court heard that the man had been in a state of extreme stress at the time of the murder. The judge said that the man's actions were understandable in the circumstances. The man was released from custody and is now living with his family.

body found in su

A body was found in a suitcase in a hotel room. The body was identified as a woman who had disappeared several weeks ago. The police are investigating the case and have arrested several people. The woman's family is devastated by the news. The police are working to identify the person who put the body in the suitcase.

Chess wins con

A chess player has won a competition. The player, who is a professional, has won the title of champion. The competition was held in a large hall and attracted many spectators. The player's victory was a surprise to many. The player is now planning to tour the country.

Two nurses sus

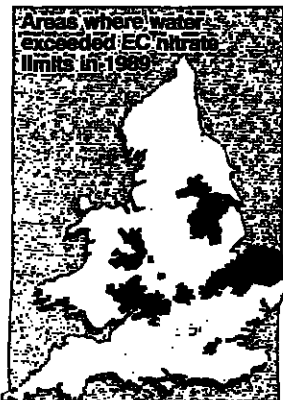
Two nurses have been suspended from their jobs. The nurses were accused of misconduct. The hospital board has decided to suspend them until a full investigation is completed. The nurses are denying the charges. The hospital is a large teaching hospital and has a reputation for high standards.

EC convicts Britain of poor quality tap water

By MICHAEL HORNSBY and MICHAEL MCCARTHY

BRITAIN is in breach of European Community standards on drinking water, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg ruled yesterday. It is the first time in 20 years of EC membership that the government has been found guilty of disobeying Community environmental legislation. The court is due to decide next year whether the seas off Blackpool, Formby and Southport beaches meet Community bathing standards. The ruling comes less than three weeks before the Edinburgh summit of EC leaders to define the doctrine of subsidiarity. Water quality is one of the areas that Britain feels might be better left to member states. Michael Howard, the environment secretary, said that the court's decision should be put into perspective. There had been judgments on environmental issues against every other EC country except Portugal, which was allowed numerous relaxations of Community law because it joined only recently. Mr Howard said in Copenhagen, where he was representing Britain at a meeting on the Montreal Protocol to save the ozone layer: "By the end of this year we shall have complied with the drinking water directive in 12 of the areas concerned and in the remainder by 1995."

"Our contention to the court was that it was not practicable to comply in these areas any sooner. There was no danger



to health in any of these areas."

Friends of the Earth, whose complaint led to the case, called the ruling "a famous victory" for the consumer. Liana Stupples, the group's water campaigner, said: "The government has been caught red-handed."

The court's chief finding was that drinking water in 28 supply zones in England had breached the EC limit on nitrate levels, which was adopted in 1980 and should have taken effect in 1985. The nitrate concentration is not permitted to exceed 50 milligrams per litre. The judges acquitted Britain of a second charge that lead levels in Scotland's drinking water breached the rules.

The judges rejected the government's case that it had taken "all practicable steps" to implement the nitrate limit.

Twenty-one of the supply zones are in the Anglian Water region and five in the Severn-Trent Water region. The three other zones are managed by the Three Valleys Water Company, north of London, and the South Staffordshire company. About 800,000 people—1.5 per cent of the population of England and Wales—are connected to public water supplies in these zones.

Michael Swallow, director of The Water Companies' Association, which represents 23 supply companies, said: "This judgment needs to be put in context. In 1991, 97.2 per cent of 41,500 water samples tested for nitrate complied with EC standards."

Nitrate in water has been linked to the "blue-baby syndrome" — oxygen deficiency in infants — and was at one time thought to play a role in stomach cancer. Most scientists now agree the risks have been exaggerated.

Much of the nitrate in water is attributed to the delayed effect of ploughing up millions of acres for food production in the second world war, which released large amounts of nitrogen locked up in the soil.

Husband cleared of raping his bride

A Pakistani hotel chief was yesterday cleared of raping his bride on their wedding night. The jury was told that the man, aged 27, and the British-born Muslim woman of 19 took part in a hastily arranged marriage so that he could extend his six-month visitor's visa. The husband's counsel, Roger Keen QC, said that the girl had made the rape allegation to enable her to escape the marriage. "It is a terrible thing for a girl brought up and educated in England to be compelled to marry someone she hardly knows," he said.

The bride, from Newcastle upon Tyne, said that although she disliked the man she agreed to marry him under pressure from her family. The couple married in a Muslim ceremony ten days after their only meeting, followed by a register office wedding in Sheffield, where the man was staying with relatives after taking a hotel management course in Italy.

He told the jury that the woman's mother had agreed that he could have the choice of her three teenage daughters, and he had no idea that his bride was against the arrangement. The husband said that although the couple slept together, he had not attempted to have sexual intercourse with his wife. He had agreed to a no-sex pact until they knew each other better. He had no need to extend his stay because he had a good job in Pakistan.

Body found in suitcase

The body of a woman aged 46 has been found in a suitcase at a guesthouse in Swindon, Wiltshire, after the landlady noticed blood trickling through a ceiling. Christine Campbell, from Swindon, a divorced mother of two grown children, had been sexually assaulted and strangled in the guesthouse before her body was moved to the attic. She had dark curly collar-length hair, and was wearing a black coat, a black pencil skirt, a light green crew-necked woollen jumper and black shoes. Police want to question anyone who may have seen her in Pasha's or Vadim's night clubs in Swindon on Wednesday last week, or a taxi driver who may have taken a woman to the guesthouse.

Chess wins continue

The England team yesterday continued its unbeaten run in the European team chess championship in Debrecen, Hungary, beating Holland in the fourth round by 2½ points to 1½. Michael Adams won his match and remains unbeaten in the competition, while Nigel Short, Tony Miles and Jon Speelman managed draws. Russia, which beat the Ukraine 2½ to 1½, still leads with 12 from 16 points, followed by England and Lithuania on 10½ points and Bulgaria, Holland and Israel on 10.

Two nurses suspended

Two nursing staff at Ashworth special hospital, Merseyside, have been suspended after investigations into a "stream of hateful literature" directed at staff and patients. Further enquiries among staff are in progress. Ashworth has 650 mentally disordered patients detained in special security, and 1,400 staff, 900 of them nurses. A full report into the spread of extremist propaganda directed chiefly at hospital staff will be given in the new year after the investigation by two former police chiefs.

Weeks of manoeuvring and uncertainty will follow general election vote

Irish politicians jockey for power

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

POLITICAL leaders in the Irish Republic today begin what could be more than two weeks of intense post-election manoeuvring for power.

As soon as the first indications of a result are known sometime this afternoon, the complex process of coalition-building in a hung parliament will begin. Most observers believe the uncertainty could continue until December 14, when the Dáil is due to resume and a new Taoiseach will be elected.

At the last election in 1989, the republic was left effectively without a government for almost a month while Charles Haughey, then Fianna Fáil leader, gradually came to terms with his party's first ever coalition government with the Progressive Democrats.

In this election, the main features have been the failure of Fianna Fáil to improve its position, the resurgence of the Labour party which may add as many as nine seats to its 16

in the last Dáil, and the failure of Fine Gael to capitalise on Fianna Fáil's difficulties.

With 83 seats required for an overall majority in the 166-seat Dáil, Fianna Fáil looks like returning with about 74, down three on last time. Fine Gael with around 51, Labour with 25, the Progressive Democrats with six, Democratic Left with six, and four independents.

On these figures, the most likely outcomes are a coalition between Fianna Fáil and Labour or a three-way deal between Labour, Fine Gael, and the Democrats. However, another Fianna Fáil link up with the Democrats, or a minority Fianna Fáil government, propped up by independents, are possibilities.

The key role, however, looks like being played by Labour. The expected increase in its vote reflects disillusionment with Fianna Fáil. In a deal with Fianna Fáil, Labour can be expected



Decision: a nun voting yesterday in Dublin

to be looking for at least four cabinet posts and some junior ministerial positions.

First indications of the results of the three abortion

referendums, also voted on yesterday will be known this afternoon, but counting is not expected to be completed until tomorrow.

Village goes slow in poll spoilt by choice

THE voters of Naul seemed confused and exasperated by the choice facing them in their community hall yesterday (Edward Gorman writes).

While polling in the country as a whole may have been officially described as "brisk", in Naul — a small farming village about 17 miles north of Dublin — voting had, as usual, been slow by midday. Carmel Nugent, a cheerful mother of three, and presiding officer who has organised elections in the village for more than a decade, said about 10 per cent of the 570 registered voters had been in by lunchtime. Most would vote in the evening after returning from work in Dublin.

Facing them were no fewer than four piles of ballot papers. The yellow general election forms listed ten separate candidates in the Dublin North constituency, four of whom will be returned to the Dáil under the single transferable vote system. The choice in Naul was from two Independents, two Fine Gael,

three Fianna Fáil, one Green, one Labour, and one Sinn Féin candidate.

Next to those forms were the three abortion referendum ballots. The green one was the proposal on travel (likely to be approved), the red one was on information (also likely to be approved), and the white one was the all important abortion amendment, or the so-called "substantive issue" (likely to be rejected).

Mrs Nugent said she believed people were confused by the referendum choices and jaded at the prospect of voting in a general election. "This time a lot of people just aren't going to come out to vote because they are just fed up," she said.

Outside, in the small main street, election posters strung up on lampposts were already starting to fall down. Most were for the Fianna Fáil troika of candidates in the constituency, bearing out Mrs Nugent's analysis that, in Naul, most people usually vote Fianna Fáil.

At eight o'clock last night, Carlos Sainz

and Luis Moya took the chequered flag and emerged as winners at the climax of another exciting Lombard RAC Rally.

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Burgeoning charters hailed as a revolution or dismissed as a £24 million public relations hoax

Britons start to master the art of complaining

Government plans to overhaul the public services are still seen by sceptical citizens as a public relations exercise

By MICHAEL DYNES, WHITEHALL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN has never been renowned for its quality of service, at least in the eyes of its foreign critics. It has tolerated abruptness from rail staff, rudeness from waiters and the petty tyrannies of government officials.

Under the citizen's charter, the first annual report on which was published yesterday, all that could be about to change. Instead of being mocked as a nation prepared to endure almost any indignity, the British seem set to master the art of complaining. While supporters and critics of John Major's initiative debate whether the citizen's charter constitutes a new philosophy of government or an elaborate public relations hoax, new guidelines are being drawn up across the public sector which spell out the level and quality of service to which citizens are entitled. Even the name represents a break with a past in which the people were merely subjects.

The new Citizen's Charter Unit is accountable to William Waldegrave, the public service minister. It has 27 staff and a budget of £24 million for the next three years, most of which will be spent teaching the British their rights. The unit is responsible for ensuring that the charter eventually permeates all levels of government, an exercise expected to take the best part of a decade.

So far, 28 charters have been published, including British Rail's passenger's charter, the Inland Revenue's taxpayer's charter and the courts charter. Five more are in the pipeline, concerning further and higher education and the Docklands Light Railway.

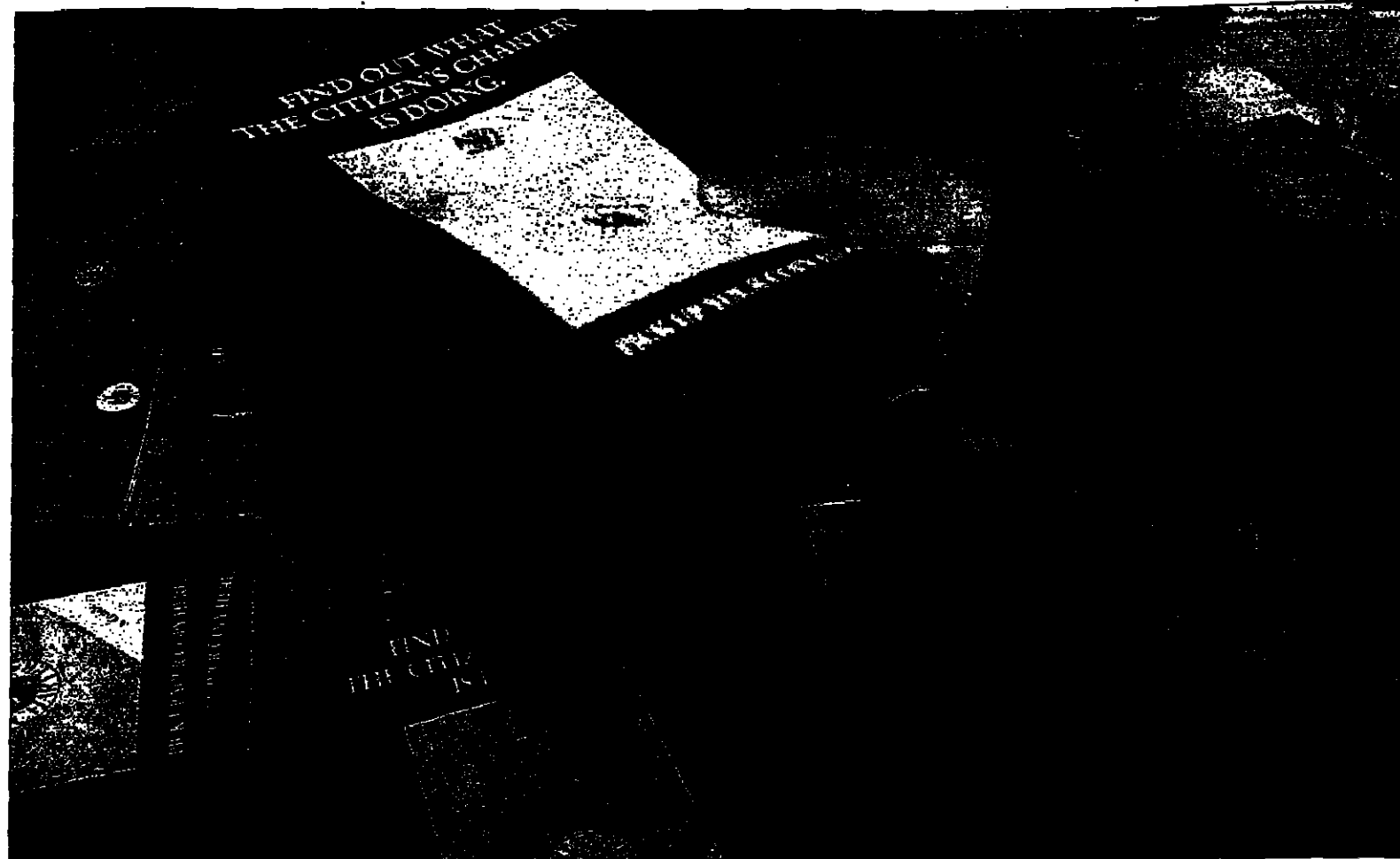
Each charter seeks to provide a statement of service, while at the same time providing a mechanism for improving standards. According to Mr Major's staff, this is an objective that has been dear to the prime minister's heart since he became chairman of Lambeth housing committee in the 1970s. It also represents the Conservative party's attempt to undermine the view that Labour puts a higher value on public services.

The charters are basically about providing the consumer with the necessary information to assess the level of service being provided. Improvements, should they materialise, will stem largely from more efficient management. The charters will do little to ensure that additional resources are found to fund public sector services.

Marjorie Mowlam, Labour's citizen's charter spokesman, dismissed the programme as "farce and hype" and denounced Mr Waldegrave's claim that 90 per cent of initial commitments had been met or were "in hand". She accused him of having no basis on which to make the claim, as there had been no research to check that standards were being achieved (Arthur Leathley writes).

Replying to Mr Waldegrave's statement in the Commons, she said that the charter idea was a good one and had been originated by Labour, but added that government dogma and ideology had made consumers sceptical.

"If you were really serious about the quality of public services, you would have announced a long-term commitment to the public sector. Instead we have another



Rights issue: copies of the first annual report on the citizen's charter, published yesterday to a mixed reception

glossy document full of regurgitated facts." She said that there was cynicism and scepticism among consumers.

They had seen reductions in funding for legal aid and Citizens' Advice Bureaux and were less concerned with minor changes in utility services than with the high salaries that utility company chairmen were receiving.

Several MPs cited reports that BR wanted to lower its punctuality targets as evidence that the charter was failing to improve standards. Dr Mowlam said: "People's daily experience of BR isn't a satisfaction with the publishing of punctuality and reliability targets but the actuality of the slashing of the Department of Transport's budget."

Mr Waldegrave came under strong pressure from Labour and Conservative MPs to make sure that the courts charter increased access. Tory MPs John Butcher and Michael Jopling said there were concerns that legal services were now beyond the reach of many.

Charter assessment, page 1
Diary, page 16
Leading article, page 17

Helplines offer key to service

By IAN MURRAY

INFORMATION about all the 28 charters, including helplines and addresses can be obtained by ringing 0345 300130 (calls at local rates). A leaflet explaining what has been done can be obtained on freephone 0800 100 101.

BR passenger's charter: Customers' letters of complaints average between 100 and 200 a day to each of nine BR regions. Charter's main asset is promise of rebate if trains are late or cancelled. Only Kent Coast line is below target so far. Annual season ticket holders will qualify 5 per cent reduction next year.

London Underground passenger's charter: Helpline number posted in all stations: 120 calls a day, not all complaints. Customers more than 20 minutes late get rebate, since August 1 "fewer than 20,000" have been paid total of "less than £100,000". Helpline taxpayer's char-

ter (VAT) and traveller's charter (Customs and Excise): document setting out complaints procedure issued in September and traveller's charter in January. Both are being surveyed.

Patients' charter: 900,000 requests received for full version of charter. Numbers waiting more than two years cut from 51,000 to five. All

regional health authorities have helplines. NHS freephone helpline, 0800 22 44 88, covers England, Wales and Scotland.

Parent's charter: Parent's right to know about schools met by publication of comparative exam tables last Wednesday: 5,000 people have since rung education department's freephone number, 0800 211 112 for a copy.

Inland Revenue: IR says it set up prototype charter in 1986. Claimants can raise queries locally even if their tax is administered elsewhere.

Jobseeker's charter, redundancy payments service charter (employment department): Department is cutting waiting time in Jobcentres and waiting for phone.

Benefits agency customer charter: Freephone number, 0800 666 555, receives 1.5 million calls every year.

Waiting limits set for start of trial

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE down-at-heel, unfriendly image of courts with no waiting areas and long delays is to be tackled under a new framework published yesterday which sets target waiting times and guarantees national standards of service to witnesses, defendants and jurors.

The Courts Charter requires courts to publish the time within which they can provide a hearing in a civil case once the parties are ready for trial, and in criminal cases to conform to a timetable for bringing cases to trial.

Custody cases should be brought to trials within eight weeks of committal, while

cases where defendants are on bail should be brought to trial within 16 weeks of committal, the charter says.

Slack service by court staff should also be a thing of the past. The charter outlines deadlines within which court officials will have to respond in busy areas of court business such as divorce, probate and debt telephone calls, for instance, must be answered within 30 seconds.

People using the courts are to be sent maps of how to get there, details of catering facilities and the name of someone to speak to at court for more information. At court, they

should find clear signposts, "courteous and prompt service from court staff who will wear name badges" and notices telling them how to complain.

In criminal cases, worried witnesses can ask to be shown a courtroom before the case starts. Standards are also set for jury service. Jurors are to be shown a recently made video describing their duties in a trial and what happens.

The Lord Chancellor said the charter was a "public recommitment to quality" in the service the courts' strove to provide. However, he warned against too great expectations in the area of the courts' service. "The justice system is complex. The interests of those involved, and even the objectives of justice itself, are various and, in some respects, can conflict."

A spokesman from his department added: "It is not like British Rail aiming to get its passengers comfortably and safely into Waterloo on time." Imposing uniform standards was difficult to achieve because of the different aims of court users.

Paul Boateng, Labour's legal affairs spokesman, said the charter "seeks to hide an increasingly run down and under-resourced system of civil and criminal justice behind a glossy veneer that bears no relation to the reality of the courts system."

Major's town gives package 'no' vote

By KATE ALDERSON

A RETIRED civil servant who has lived in the prime minister's Huntingdon constituency all of his life is unimpressed with his "big idea", the citizen's charter.

"I don't know anyone who has got any satisfaction from this charter business," Ronald Featherer said. "It is an insult to the citizen's intelligence. It's just another stunt."

Ian Young, from Hacken, called the charter "a crocodile, without any teeth". He said: "The citizen's charter doesn't give you very much at all. Look at the call-out time for ambulances in London. What good has the charter done? If there were mandatory powers to force people to give you a better service then something might get done."

Jeanette Nightingale, an office worker, read the charter to see how it would affect her rights. She remains unimpressed. "It doesn't seem to be getting

into practice. Waiting lists are still too long. I have a friend who has been told that he must wait four months just for an X-ray. It's a lot of empty promises."

Few people seemed aware of the 28 charters published by public bodies, but inside Huntingdon's library a big blue and white stand displays glossy blue leaflets.

At the Citizens' Advice Bureau Joy Western, the assistant manager, said: "People are not really interested in it. We don't have many enquiries about it. If there's no power under law to make services better then people think 'What's the point?'"

At Huntingdonshire District Council offices there was some confusion over the charter. The receptionist spoke to a council officer and said: "I've been told that Cambridge City Council deal with some parts of the charter, we don't here. I've been told to give you this telephone number and the name of a man who might be able to tell you about it. I don't know who he is, but his name is William Waldegrave. I hope he can help you."

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Giant iceberg re-routes the ship of state

MOST government initiatives are taken more seriously than they deserve. The citizen's charter has suffered the reverse fate. It has been widely decided as a gimmick which fails to tackle flaws in public sector provision. But that is both to underestimate the seriousness of the prime minister's commitment and to patronise the public about understandable worries.

Yesterday's white paper underlines the extent of the shake-up in government. The performance targets are only the public face of what William Waldegrave yesterday described as a shift towards management by contract and by explicit objectives. They form part of what Stephen Dorrell, financial secretary to the Treasury, on Monday called a "long march" through Whitehall.

Ironically, this Maoist attempt to create a permanent revolution in government is being spearheaded by two ministers, Mr Waldegrave and Mr Dorrell, who are viewed with suspicion by the Thatcherites. In practice, what Mr Waldegrave was yesterday presenting as a new synthesis has diverse roots, some going back to Sir Edward Heath's "quiet revolution" of the early 1970s.

Of course, there are holes in the charter approach. The setting of formal targets leads to distortions that leave customers dissatisfied. But there have been real advances in setting standards. Despite continuing scepticism, everyone now has to be charmed-minded. James Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, has overcome even the conservatism of the legal establishment to produce a courts charter.

The most significant changes are happening beneath the surface to ensure that the published targets can be met. Until the last couple of

years, central government, both senior mandarins and civil service unions, had largely resisted changes in structure, such as contracting-out, which it imposed on local government. But this is now changing. As Mr Dorrell said, instead of the traditional question of "what can we sell?" the question will increasingly be "what must we keep?"

This will, he argued, lead to a distinction between the purchase and provision of services, as already applies in the NHS. So, even where the state is still responsible for certain services, central government will not necessarily remain the provider as well as the purchaser. This means not just privatisations but also the subcontracting of support func-

tions and the setting up of semi-independent executive agencies.

Mr Waldegrave yesterday signalled some significant cracks in the traditional structure of Whitehall. Market testing, in which information technology, professional services and estate management are subject to competitive bidding, is being extended from £25 million up to almost £1.5 billion, a tenth of central government's running costs.

This should not only produce stable cost savings but also change managerial behaviour. Ministers have also at last started to challenge the previously centralised framework of civil service pay bargaining. The larger govern-

ment executive agencies will be expected to assume responsibility for pay bargaining from April 1994 and performance pay for civil servants is being extended. This may mean that, at the top of the civil service, more officials are appointed on the basis of short-term contracts. Of course, flexibility is inhibited by the 1.5 per cent limit on public sector pay settlements.

As the low key discussion in the Commons yesterday showed, the full significance of these developments for central government is not widely appreciated by MPs, who have focused on only the visible part of the iceberg.

A revolution is under way in Whitehall which has largely been ignored across the road in Westminster.

PETER RIDDELL

A LAW FOR PRIVACY?

SHOULD there be a law to protect privacy? Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, and Lord Williams of Mostyn, QC, will join Simon Jenkins, the former editor of *The Times*, and Richard Shepherd MP to debate the issue at the London Press Centre, New Street Square, London EC4 on December 2 at 6.30pm (071-704 9941). Lord Woolf will be in the chair. To obtain tickets to the forum, *Should there be a law to protect privacy?*, being held in association with Rubinstein Callingham, Polden & Gale, fill in the coupon at right.

THE TIMES

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مكتبة الأمل

Drivers face threat of tolls on motorway

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MOTORISTS could be charged for driving on all motorways under plans to allow the private sector to take over the control of Britain's main highways.

The proposals to be outlined in a green paper in March or April could result in tolls being imposed on Britain's 50 existing motorways as well as new roads. In the longer term, the scheme may lead to privatisation of the 1,937 miles of motorway network.

The Treasury, Downing Street Policy Unit and the Transport department have all been involved in discussions on the green paper, which is expected to include a range of options such as selling off existing motorways and levying tolls on all motorways.

One Whitehall official argued that charges would bring roads in line with railways and airlines, would earn extra money for the exchequer, and might encourage travellers to use trains.

Other options confine tolls to new motorways, which would be more acceptable to motorists.

John MacGregor, the transport secretary, is keen to get private firms to take over the financing, design, building and operation of all major inter-urban roads, arguing that this would enable the transport department's £23 billion road programme — now scheduled over about 20

■ The government is seeking to boost its road programme by "privatising" main highways. Motorists may have to pay

years — to be implemented much more quickly. The cost of building one mile of a three-lane motorway in both directions is £8.4 million, and Mr MacGregor is keen to transfer as much of the cost as possible out of his department.

Transport officials say it is unlikely that motorways will be sold off as chunks of land to private developers. "It is a matter of how one defines ownership — whether you transfer the ownership of land — or transfer operating rights," one official said. He emphasised that the green paper, still at an early stage, would be "very consultative" but would encompass a "radical programme", which in the long term — ten to 20 years — could lead to the "privatisation of motorways".

The green paper is expected to cover inter-urban roads, bridges and tunnels. Measures to sweeten the pill of extra road charges for drivers are also being considered. However, it is said that any plan to reduce or abolish road tax is likely to be frustrated by the European Court on the grounds that it is anti-competitive. European users would pay the charge without sharing the benefit.

Legislation to allow tolls to be levied on existing motorways is unlikely to be introduced until the 1993-4 parliamentary session, but transport department sources argue that steps to transfer roads to private operators could be taken before then. At the moment the government often contracts out the building and design of roads to the private sector.

Under the new scheme the transport department could contract out the financing, design and building or renovation of roads and ask the firm to take control of operating the road, under a type of leasing arrangement.

In the short term the private firms would then receive government funding according to the amount of traffic on their roads. Once legislation had been passed, however, firms would be able to impose tolls and collect the money directly.

Mr MacGregor favours an electronic system, preferably without barriers. He is keen to avoid pay booths or pay buckets to avoid greater congestion on motorways. Drivers would have to buy a season ticket, possibly covering certain areas, which would be displayed on the windscreen.



Voice of authority: parliamentary award winners Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, above, and Elizabeth Peacock, below



An award ceremony to watch

By JOE JOSEPH

THERE may come a point in the life of a politician or a magazine when they do something that shows such foresight that it becomes hard to ignore what they say again.

So when *The Spectator*, picking last year's Parliamentarian of the Year awards, chose David Mellor as its Member to Watch, it guaranteed that this year's awards

would be unmissable. But the spice of yesterday's prizes lay less in any prescience than in *The Spectator's* clear determination to heal Tory party rifts.

After a well-groomed opening address by Kenneth Baker, editor Dominic Lawson began the healing process by awarding Parliamentarian of the Year honours to Betty

Boothroyd, a Speaker who ensures smooth sailing in parliamentary waters.

This year's Member to Watch? Michael Forsyth, whose loyalty to Thatcher and keenness to pick fights with Brussels meddlers makes him a valued member of John Major's team. New Member? Iain Duncan-Smith, the only new Tory MP to vote against the Maastricht paving bill.

Campaigner of the Year? Elizabeth Peacock, a Tory backbencher so loyal that she gave up a job as PPS to win the country round to Michael Heseltine's new view that doing 31 pits is a preposterous plan dreamt up by troublemakers who wish the government harm.

When it fell to Richard Ryder to accept a "Special Award", the Chief Whip praised Kenneth Baker's willingness to latch on to the majority, even when this means doing somersaults with his opinions. Only political novices assumed that Mr Baker's noisy qualms over Maastricht meant he was against the treaty.

Are these awards not guaranteed to quell talk of splits within the Tory party?



Challenge to Tories on income

Labour has challenged Conservative Central Office to disclose the source of £8 million of unaccounted political donations it claims were received last year.

Frank Dobson, the shadow employment secretary, yesterday published a list of company donations to Tory party funds, totalling £2.3 million last year. Another £1.4 million came from constituency organisations. Mr Dobson said that with Central Office costs running at £1 million a month, an £8 million gap between income and expenditure was unaccounted for. "Why isn't it declared?" Mr Dobson said. "Is this the dash that dare not speak its name?" A Tory official dismissed Labour's figures as "plucked out of thin air".

Heating bill

A bill to give fuel credits to the needy during the winter months was introduced by Alice Mahon, Labour MP for Halifax. She said that many old people die from cold-related causes during cold weather and the increase in deaths in winter rose much more markedly in Britain than in Germany and some Scandinavian countries.

Book price

English public libraries spent £84.8 million on books in 1990-1, Robert Key, the heritage minister, said in a written reply.

In Parliament

Commons (2.30): Questions: Northern Ireland; prime minister. Debate on the management of the public service. Lords (3): Debate on EC human rights report. Hereditary peerages bill, second reading.

Howard seeks to quell tax fears

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE biggest losses under the new council tax will amount to no more than £200 per household a year, Michael Howard will tell MPs today.

The environment secretary will also seek to reassure his troops by announcing that he is taking drastic new powers to curb town hall spending. Councils will be allowed to overshoot their Whitehall-imposed spending targets by only 2.25 per cent, compared with 6.5 per cent this year.

The new figures will be set out today in the Commons as Mr Howard lays the ground for the introduction of the council tax in April, three years after the ill-fated poll tax. Although he is unlikely to admit as much, he and Treasury ministers believe that the new formula for raising taxes is likely to be their last chance to solve a problem that has bedevilled the Tories since Margaret Thatcher's 1974 pledge to abolish the rates.

A senior Whitehall source suggested yesterday that if the new property-based tax followed the poll tax into oblivion, the government would have little choice but to pay for all town hall spending out of central taxation.

Mr Howard's difficulties today in placating his backbenchers have been compounded by what even his

supporters admit is a "tough" settlement in his bargaining with the Treasury. He has won only £1.2 billion or 3.7 per cent in extra grants from Whitehall, of which some £350 million will be earmarked for the transitional relief scheme, cushioning the impact of the new tax for losers, most of whom are in the Tory heartlands of London and the South East.

A leaked letter from Mr Howard to Tory MPs highlighted his worries yesterday as he acknowledged that "colleagues in the south will be concerned about levels of bills". He said that transitional relief would provide "significant help for families who do lose and will be particularly helpful in the south". He promised "vigorous use" of capping powers.

The level of relief will operate on a sliding scale corresponding to the eight property valuation bands. Maximum increases for the average Band C house (worth between £52,000 and £68,000) will be £100 a year. Maximum increases at the top of the scale will be £200 a year.

Jack Straw, the Labour environment spokesman, said the council tax was "rigged in favour of the well-off".

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Branson derailed

RICHARD Branson, the Virgin Group chairman, was accused yesterday of having a "protonian" level of knowledge of railways by a member of the Commons transport select committee, which is considering government proposals to privatise BR (Jonathan Prym writes).

Mr Branson, who wants his Virgin Rail subsidiary to operate a train service between London and Glasgow and Edinburgh in direct competition to BR, told the committee it was critical that the government should allow for competition on its long-distance services.

Paul Flynn, a Labour

committee member, questioned Mr Branson's knowledge and enthusiasm for railways and asked how he could run a train service when "your understanding is at a protonian level".

Mr Branson said later that he was "not too much" annoyed by the dismissive treatment he had received. "Not many MPs have run a business. That is a problem and presumably why they call in business people."

James Sherwood, president of the Sea Containers ferry group, said he believed his company could make savings of £50 million if it was allowed to run the track in the southern region.

UN suspends help to Serbian community after local commanders ignore agreement to let convoy pass

Bosnian Serbs block aid to Muslim enclave

By TIM JUDAH IN LJUBOVIA
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF



Hand-off gamble: General Philippe Morillon says the Serb military has not kept agreements

RELATIONS between the United Nations and Bosnian Serb leaders were plunged into crisis yesterday as Serb military commanders barred the progress of a UN convoy destined for Srebrenica, one of the last big areas of Muslim resistance. The UN suspended humanitarian aid to Serbs in Bosnia until the same assistance can be delivered to Srebrenica, and a tense stand-off was beginning.

"We will sit on the border for days, if needs be," said Lyndall Sachs, spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the convoy of 20 lorries waited on the Serbian bank of the Drina river. A reconnaissance party that tried to cross was met with a lowered frontier post. On the Serbian bank, locals sneered at the UN and shouted at journalists: "Go home, pigs."

Close to Gorazde, another besieged Muslim enclave, a UN armoured personnel carrier hit a landmine, but no one was injured. The convoy was reported to be waiting until other mines had been cleared before proceeding.

The UN also said yesterday it was interrupting its humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo after a French aid plane was hit by small-arms fire. A spokesman said the flights may be resumed today.

Despite explicit permission given by General Rutko Mladic, the Bosnian Serb military leader, local commanders said yesterday that they had no authority to let the Srebrenica convoy pass. Major General Philippe Morillon, the UN overall commander in Bosnia, has complained of Serb failure to honour previous agreements.

On Tuesday, Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, told the UN permission for the convoy was being withdrawn because of fighting round the enclave, but Mrs Sachs said: "We learnt from our own sources that there were no security prob-



lems. From the Serbian bank of the Drina, the occasional rumble of artillery or mortars could be heard coming from the hills.

The enclave of Srebrenica has shot to the top of the UN agenda because its estimated 80,000 inhabitants, including 26,000 refugees, have

when Serb militiamen torched the Muslim village of Hranica, two miles outside Brannac, killing four people. Since then, the Muslims have retreated into the Srebrenica enclave and have mounted hit-and-run guerrilla operations, burning down surrounding Serb villages.

Serb commanders are desperate to starve out Srebrenica because they cannot defeat it militarily. What is not clear is whether the decision is being taken by "renegade elements" at a local level or at the very top. One UN officer said yesterday that he believed the orders came from General Mladic himself but that "it is part of the military strategy to pretend the blockade is at the local level".

Desperate pleas for help are being radioed out of Srebrenica, saying that thousands are without adequate shelter, food supplies have virtually run out, and that gastric and other diseases are beginning to spread.

Both the Bosnian Serbs and the UN are playing for high stakes. The Serbs have decided to forgo their share of international aid, except in the Sarajevo area, in order to crush Srebrenica. The UN is gambling because 50 per cent of assistance now reaching Sarajevo comes by road from Belgrade and could be cut off by the Bosnian Serbs at a moment's notice.

Meanwhile, in Istanbul yesterday Turkey convened a meeting of the nations most directly threatened by the spread of fighting in the former Yugoslavia. Representatives from countries including Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania and Albania called for the UN to deploy troops throughout the region.

In Geneva, the UN agreed to exempt from sanctions an emergency mission being sent to Montenegro to repair the flood-threatened dam at Mojkovac. The European Community said it would give \$135,000 (£99,000) to help repair the dam, which was damaged in floods and threatens to spill seven million tonnes of toxic waste into the Balkan river system.

Belgrade gangland killing unveils link to the death squads

By ROGER BOYES, EAST EUROPE CORRESPONDENT

Connections between the Serbian underworld and the killing squads in Bosnia have been revealed by the gangland murder of a "capo" in the Belgrade Hyatt Hotel.

Alexander Knezevic, 22, ran a restaurant protection racket using scores of criminals who fought in Croatia and Bosnia. Knezevic — nicknamed "Knele" — dabbled in prostitution and gun-running. He became rich, drove a Porsche, wore heavy gold chains and a Rolex watch. Nobody knows who shot him.

Arkan, whose real name is Zelko Razajevic, controls a paramilitary group, the Tigers, that "efficiently cleansed" Vukovar in Croatia last year and has been plundering eastern Bosnia.

At the height of the Bosnian war, Arkan was said to be training 1,000 militiamen a week. He, too, has become wealthy originally on loot from Bosnia and then from his various rackets in Serbia.

Although he is wanted for robbery in Amsterdam, Brussels, Bene and Stockholm, he is virtually immune from arrest in Serbia. He has a controlling interest in the Delija protective agency that offers protection service to the Belgrade casinos. Many of the black-market currency exchanges are run by Arkan and he has taken a tentative step towards respectability by opening an official bank.

Another gangster-wardlord is Dragolav Bokon, formerly a philosophy lecturer at Belgrade University, who runs two paramilitary groups, the White Eagles and the powerful Dusa unit. His groups are said to be responsible for many massacres in Croatia,

including the mutilation of 15 policemen in Borovo Selo, Bokon, who says he has Australian citizenship, is a partner in Elita, an estate agency that offers cash advances to the homeless.

The corporals and sergeants of these paramilitary groups are mainly hardened criminals. There is thus a natural bridge between the fighting on the front and the running of the black market in Serbia. They enjoy official protection because they feed a myth of war heroism and because the Serbian leadership is forced increasingly into a legal twilight. In particular, many underworld gangs are active in sanctions-busting.

Arkan supervises much of the petrol smuggling through Romania and from Greece — and he has an interest in some of the filling stations that sell the fuel. Knele was experienced in gathering looted guns, stockpiling them and then resupplying them, thus dodging the arms embargo.

A protective umbrella has been spread over these men by four "respectable" politicians and officials. General Ratko Mladic, commander of the Serbian army in Bosnia, has been integrating paramilitary commanders into his battle plans. There were early frictions between the Serb army and the irregulars, but these have been largely smoothed over by the general.

The second key figure is the former intelligence chief, Mihaly Kertesz, who provided part of the funding for paramilitary training and gave Arkan the honorary rank of colonel. Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, needs the paramilitary groups for his ethnic cleansing operations.

In a matter of a day, one section of the White Eagles can put a whole Muslim community to flight — they are truly terrifying. The fourth element is Vojislav Seselj, ultra-nationalist leader of the Serbian Radical party, who gives the paramilitaries a voice in Belgrade.

Little wonder that the gangland leaders enjoy police immunity. One explanation of Knele's murder was that the police were angry that he was moving into the drugs trade. Serbia does not have a big drugs problem, but Knele may have had ambitions to be a key dealer in cocaine. That would have ended his benign relations with the police.

Arkan, 40, has different, mainly political ambitions. He had been accumulating wealth for the postwar period and is determined to become as respectable as he can before the regime of President Milosevic collapses.

Knele came from a long criminal dynasty. Whatever regime emerged from the rubble of war, Knele would have found a way of flourishing until he took one risk too many. He could afford to take risks — like challenging Arkan's prerogatives in the casino protection racket.

"You were the samurai of the hot asphalt of Belgrade," said one of Knele's admirers at his funeral. Nobody expects the murder of this urban samurai to be investigated with much thoroughness.

Bush seeks monitors for Kosovo

From Jen Macintyre in Washington

PRESIDENT Bush has asked France and Britain to set up with America an international civilian force to monitor Serb attacks on the Albanian majority in Kosovo.

He has become concerned at the fate of Albanians in Kosovo after intelligence reports that the Serbian government was providing Serbian civilians with weapons and confiscating the arms of Albanians, while increasing Serb military activity in the Albanian enclave. Officials fear that, if the war spreads to Kosovo (where the population is 90 per cent ethnic Albanian), it could trigger greater conflict in the Balkans.

The Bush proposal, sent to both John Major and President Mitterrand, also encouraged them to support demands for a restoration of autonomy in Kosovo, according to *The New York Times*.

Former officials, some congressmen and the United Nations have urged more radical intervention in Kosovo, but Dick Cheney, the defence secretary, and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, strongly oppose the direct involvement of United States forces.

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Community undermines key French argument

FROM GEORGE BROCK AND TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Commission undermined last night one of France's key arguments against the European-American deal on farm subsidies by agreeing that the settlement struck in Washington last week fits in with the European Community's agricultural reform.

The commissioners agreed to send their analysis of the agreement to governments today. A spokesman, asked if the report confirmed that the EC-US deal was compatible with EC farm reform, said: "That it does."

The relief felt throughout the Community's capitals since the shadow of a trade war disappeared has shown that France has no solid allies against a world trade deal which may be completed in months. Bonn is signalling that even its normal closeness with Paris would not persuade its ministers to tolerate further obstruction. With a trade liberalisation treaty promising a boost for battered economies, French blocking tactics would trigger an EC crisis that would finish off the fragile Maastricht treaty.

The French government's tactics now seem directed at two Partisan shots delivered in retreat. The Socialist government, which will almost certainly lose power next March, would like to see its centre-right successors forced to cope with the unpopular fall in farm incomes. All delay helps. Paris wants to be bought off with extra compensation for its farmers. An air of crisis adds strength to its bargaining leverage.

If France did use its right of veto, the EC would find itself in a legal minefield. The Community takes its key decisions by unanimity: a state can block revisions to the EC's basic treaty and other policies. In three important areas, the rules allow governments to settle issues by "qualified majority": trade policy, agriculture and single market laws.

To wield its veto, France would first have to create an opportunity for its use — and most states are determined to have only one decision on a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade treaty, and to take that as late as possible. Since 108 governments still have 14 sections of a new treaty to fine-tune in Geneva, the EC's final approval will not be required

Further blocking tactics against farm subsidy deal could trigger crisis in EC

until early next year. Britain and Germany hope that France would be less ready to block its partners if the vote is on a whole treaty and not merely the farm subsidy deal.

By invoking the little-understood and much-disputed "Luxembourg compromise", which dates back to 1966, theoretically France can block the deal, citing threats to "vital national interests". In certain circumstances, a lone dissident can override the majority and the rules.

In the past, when there has been even the slightest whiff in the air that a member state has been looking up the rules of the Luxembourg compromise, ministers have steered clear of bringing the issue in question to the vote. Over the years, this concession turned into an effective veto.

But increasing use of majority voting led some governments to consider that the compromise had fallen into disuse. In 1982 Britain tried to block a farm price settlement as part of Margaret Thatcher's tactical game plan to win a rebate from the EC budget. The other eleven members, concurring that the farm price settlement did not impinge on vital national interests for Britain, went ahead and voted it through.

When the 1986 Single European Act boosted the use of majority votes, eight states said that the Luxembourg compromise should be pensioned off. Britain, Greece, Denmark and France asserted that it still lived. The president of the European Court of Justice, Claus Gormann, holds that only together can the four nations be sure of stopping a measure. That analysis raises the peculiar possibility that a French "Luxembourg" veto would have to be supported by Britain.

"I wouldn't want to give you any steer on that because it's so far down the track," said a wary British official last night.

□ London. Norway formally applied to join the EC yesterday. In London, Gro Harlem Brundtland, the prime minister, handed a note to John Major as head of the rotating EC presidency.

British officials said there would be three key problem areas for the negotiators: fishing, farming and whaling. Norway has failed in three previous applications. (Reuters)



Taming the fury: a Breton farmer being arrested in Saint Brieuc during a demonstration by about 600 against the Gatt accord between the European Community and America. Farmers threw petrol bombs at police and burnt the Stars and Stripes. Elsewhere in France, protesters attacked a McDonald's and dumped US produce.

Enraged farmers take on police in day of protests

BY CHARLES BREMNER IN PARIS AND MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

As French MPs prepared to vote on the government's hardline rejection of the EC-US farm accord, thousands of angry farmers disrupted traffic and destroyed property in Paris and half a dozen French cities yesterday.

Forty-four police officers were hurt in the Paris demonstration, mainly by projectiles, police said. Only one received hospital treatment. Though incidents were reported up and down the country, the authorities said the demonstrations were mild in comparison with protest days earlier this year.

Suspicion that the Socialist government will not follow through its promise to defend French agriculture fuelled the protests, which ranged from disrupting the Paris stock exchange to an attack on a McDonald's fast-food restaurant in Bordeaux.

"We just don't believe a word the government is saying. We know what they're up

to. They're going to sell us out just like the CAP (common agricultural policy)," said Alain l'Hôpital, a farmer from the Rhône region who led a group among some 3,000 on the Esplanade des Invalides, near the National Assembly on the Left Bank. Four Métro stations were closed and traffic jammed over the Seine as the protests went on, but police fears of widespread violence were not borne out.

However, the promise yesterday from Pierre Bérégovoy, the prime minister, that the government would use its veto if the EC failed to answer France's grievances did little to quell the anger among the farmers. Late in the afternoon squads of militant young farmers clashed with the CRS riot police as they tried to approach the agriculture ministry on the nearby Rue de Valenciennes.

Angry agriculteurs, outnumbered by the television crews, hurled firecrackers and

the police responded with tear gas. In other incidents, police used tear gas against farmers who threw stones and bricks at them in the Breton town of Quimper. Five police officers were hurt. In Saint Brieuc, also in Brittany, farmers threw petrol bombs at police and burned an American flag. Demonstrators burned straw, US flags and dumped US produce in Rheims, Beauvais and Lille.

Some 70 tractors surrounded the airport at Lille, in the north, and hay bales were burnt. Police stopped them from driving onto the airfield. About 200 people also blocked the Calais-Switzerland railway by dumping several tonnes of potatoes and burning hay bales on the line at Strazeele in Flanders.

Farmers tried but failed to block the A1 motorway leading to Brussels and the Channel. French ports. In Boulogne, farmers burned a Union flag in one of many

protests this week against what is seen as British complicity in the Gatt (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) deal with Washington. The militant Co-ordination Rurale union has promised to intercept all British lorries carrying farm produce from next Tuesday, if the Gatt accord is not scrapped.

Farmers insist that thousands of smallholders will be driven off the land if France accepts the Gatt agreement, which limited oilseed production and subsidised farm exports outside the EC.

The government has accepted the argument, though the experts in Brussels were still studying the impact of Friday's agreement.

Commentators have begun timidly to question the conventional wisdom that the Gatt deal, coming after this year's reform to the CAP, would effectively mean death to the rural way of life. No

politician has voiced such a thought in public, though many concede that France can ill afford to precipitate a Community crisis and a world trade war to appease the wrath of its farmers.

Farmers' leaders in Brittany yesterday condemned the threat of French violence against British lorries carrying livestock and other agricultural produce. They fear a repeat of the attacks in the summer and autumn of 1990 when about 30 lorries were ambushed in a protest against cheap imports. In two particularly gruesome incidents, some 300 sheep were poisoned and burnt alive.

David Naish, the president of the National Farmers' Union, last night blamed an "extremist faction" within French farming. "It is foolish to adopt a stance like that of the court of King Canute in thinking you can turn back the tide of future trading patterns. Such action will

alienate taxpayers who support agriculture and other industries who are important beneficiaries in a Gatt settlement."

British farmers share some of the French worry about the impact of a Gatt settlement but say the French will suffer no worse than anyone else. French farmers, who are the biggest exporters of food to non-EC countries, feel especially threatened by the recent EC-US agreement on agriculture which would cut the volume of all subsidised farm exports by 21 per cent over six years. Most of Britain's food exports go to other EC member states and are not subsidised.

Livestock transporters said last night they were apprehensive about possible French action, due to start next Tuesday, but were not planning to reduce consignments.

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Rural tradition, page 16

Yeltsin throws aide to hardline wolves

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin yesterday sacrificed one of his closest political allies and personal friends, Mikhail Potanin, a deputy prime minister and information minister, in an attempt to save his reforms from assault by conservatives in the powerful Congress of People's Deputies.

Mr Potanin is a well-known liberal whose outspoken attacks on hardliners have placed him high on the hit list of six ministers whose sacking has been demanded by the main opposition Civic Union as its price for supporting Mr Yeltsin's administration in next week's session of Russia's "super-parliament".

He said yesterday that his resignation was intended to guard Mr Yeltsin against opposition manoeuvring at "a crucial moment for Russia's future". The speed with which Mr Yeltsin accepted his resignation indicates that the president has surrendered to the inevitability of losing some key radicals from his team in order to stabilise his government, apparently at the mercy of the alliance of military and industrial figures making up Civic Union's core.

The decision to sacrifice Mr Potanin may well be an early tactic to placate the conservatives and keep the congress short to limit further damage to Mr Yeltsin's reform team. The Russian leader is spending the run-up to the congress doing deals with his enemies in the hope of salvaging the rudiments of his reforms at the Kremlin session of mainly hardline deputies.

Mr Yeltsin is exhibiting an impressive ability to fight back from a position of weakness in

which hyper-inflation and the tumbling rouble are sapping faith in reform. His methods, however, are a mystery.

He has even managed to lure Ruslan Khasbulatov, his maverick parliamentary chairman, into proposing to extend his special presidential powers by a year, but whether he achieved this by enmeshment or threat is uncertain. The parliament is also adopting a conciliatory tone, but Civic Union is clearly in confident mood and Mr Yeltsin may feel compelled to sacrifice other key figures to woo its support.

The union's leading figures also have Andrei Kozirev, the foreign minister, in their sights, regarding him as too pro-American. They also want Gennadi Burbulis, one of the president's strategists, ousted.

If the union succeeds in displacing these figures, it will herald the end of the predominance in government of liberals who rose in the Gorbachev years and proved themselves loyal Yeltsin men during his fall from grace as Moscow party chief in 1987 and again during the 1991 coup.

The indications are that Mr Potanin agreed to be sidelined to help save the government in the hope of returning to a post when things look better for Mr Yeltsin. It is a strategy employed by another close ally of the president, Sergei Shakrai, who resigned from his post in charge of legal reforms in spring to assuage the hardline parliament and returned this month as adviser on ethnic conflicts.

This is the second in a series of articles previewing Tuesday's crucial meeting of the Congress of People's Deputies

Rescue for ozone layer speeded up

FROM MICHAEL MCCARTHY IN COPENHAGEN

ENVIRONMENT ministers and officials from nearly 100 countries yesterday agreed to speed up the phasing out of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the chemicals that have been destroying the world's ozone layer.

The meeting in Copenhagen agreed to bring forward the CFC phase-out deadline from January 1, 2000 to January 1, 1996, and set targets to eliminate a range of other ozone-damaging substances. This was the third and stiffest timetable agreed in the five-year life of the Montreal Protocol.

While the agreement was hailed by Michael Howard, the environment secretary, as "a very considerable achievement", pressure groups, including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, said it did not go far enough. But Rumen Bojkov, of the World Meteorological Organisation, said that, although ozone destruction would continue for decades because of the long activity of CFCs in the atmosphere, the controls now put in place would eventually halt it.

The worst years are still to come, he said, with the amount of ozone-destroying chlorine in the atmosphere expected to peak around the turn of the century at about four parts per billion. It would be the middle of the next century before the level returned to that of the early 1980s.

Refugees attacked near Kohl's home

FROM JOHN HOLLAND IN BERLIN AND RICHARD BEEBON IN JERUSALEM

EVEN while Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, warned the Bundestag about "rising violence" in Germany, his home state of Rheinland-Palatinate was the setting for new race hatreds that threatened to destroy Germany's democratic image.

About 20 right-wing extremists, chanting "Sieg Heil" and "Germany for Germans", attacked a trailer park filled with refugees, smashing windows before escaping without trace. None of the 36 foreigners was hurt during the night attack in the town of Weisenheim am Sand, just a few miles from Herr Kohl's private home in Oggersheim, near Ludwigshafen.

There has been international uproar in the wake of the firebombings on Monday in Möln, in which two Turkish girls and a woman were killed, with some Jewish and Turkish leaders demanding that their followers should take up the armed struggle against the fascist thugs.

Israel's Jewish Agency, the quasi-governmental immigration organisation, reported yesterday that the number of West European Jews planning to immigrate to Israel has risen sharply in the past few weeks, particularly from Germany.

A poll released yesterday showed that most Germans would accept a temporary suspension of democratic freedoms to stop right-wing or left-wing extremism. In the poll by the respected Wicker Institute, 77 per cent of those queried would approve a kind of temporary state of emergency. A separate survey, however, found about a quarter of

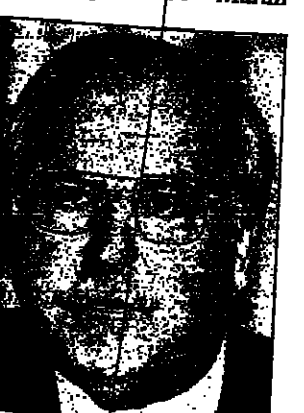
Germans supporting radical right-wing slogans like "foreigners out".

Political analysts said Herr Kohl, who appeared on television within hours of the firebombing in Möln to condemn the race violence, seemed not to have grasped the magnitude of the problem. His remarks in the Bundestag yesterday, lumping violence from both the left and the right together, only highlighted his personal blindness, according to Dr Martin

Kohl: accused of failing to see extent of racism

Mantke at Bonn's Society for Foreign Affairs. "I'm sorry to say that the chancellor is still showing an historical naiveté and is unable to make any differences between left and right-wing violence," he said.

Analysts say the chancellor is beholden to a conservative inner circle of Christian Democratic advisers. They see the violence as public discontent with the influx of refugees and asylum-seekers as a way of amending Germany's existing liberal asylum laws.



Kohl: accused of failing to see extent of racism

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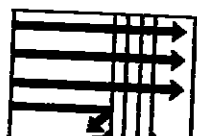
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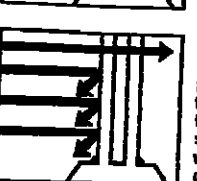
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Pakistan's fearful masters overreact to Bhutto's fading magic

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN LAHORE



Sharif: unnecessarily severe security tactics

BENAZIR Bhutto, the Pakistani opposition leader and former prime minister, leaves Lahore by train today in the next stage of a seemingly futile attempt to unsettle the government. Though cheered by hundreds at railway stations across the country, the public response was a far cry from the days when the Bhutto name was intoxicating.

She has accused the police of strong-arm tactics to keep her supporters away. While that has been true, she has failed demonstrably to rouse people sufficiently to have any chance of ousting Mian Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister. She has, though, given him a good shaking.

Even his violent suppression of her supporters, with thousands imprisoned and re-

gassed into submission, has not created a backlash. That is unusual. People have seemed weary of power politics and unresponsive to Miss Bhutto's attempts to mobilise her greatest weapon, street power.

Some of her own advisers believe her timing is wrong. Perhaps she wanted Bill Clinton, the American president-elect, whom she regards as an ally, to take notice. Or she may have been raising her profile prior to an expected court ruling that she is unfit for public office and should be barred.

Mr Sharif misjudged the public mood and unnecessarily mobilised a huge security operation to stop Miss Bhutto leading a march from the Punjab city of Rawalpindi to neighbouring Islamabad, the

federal capital. He justified the move by conjuring up images of violent mobs taking over the parliament buildings. But it was a humiliating experience for a country attempting to cast off its autocratic history. Islamabad had never seen the like, not even during military rule.

Aside from the city's 5,000-man police force, Mr Sharif summoned 5,500 men from the Punjab Constabulary, 4,000 paramilitary forces from the Frontier Constabulary and two army brigades. Barbed wire, sandbags, bungee road blocks, tear gas and riot gear were brought in. Miss Bhutto's home was ringed with wire and surrounded by riot police in an attempt to stop her getting out. It made a mockery of the

country's pretences to democracy. The saving grace was that, apart from committing two brigades, the army was not deployed.

The generals, who have run Pakistan for 24 of its 45 years of existence, are doubtless disgusted that the politicians are again up to their old antics after two years of comparative calm. But General Asif Nawaz, the army chief of staff, seems determined to stay out of politics unless the system starts to collapse, as well it might eventually if Miss Bhutto keeps pushing.

The generals are unimpressed by Mr Sharif, whose administration is at least as corrupt as Miss Bhutto's was. Democracy in Pakistan is extremely fragile, which is why British and American diplo-

mats urged Miss Bhutto to call off her "long march" in case it led to a collapse of law and order and military intervention. She refused.

That doubtless emboldened Mr Sharif into taking draconian security steps. The crackdown would have impressed earlier military dictatorships for its ferocity. Miss Bhutto was banned from the entire Punjab (later rescinded to just Islamabad and Rawalpindi) and from the North West Frontier Province for 30 days. Supporters who tried to protest were bundled into the back of police lorries and taken to jail.

Thousands are still held all over the country, leaving the ban on entering the city limits. Islamabad: Six people were hanged for murder in Lahore

yesterday, bringing the number of executions this month to 17, said a Kot Lakhpat prison official. He said the execution of a seventh man was deferred for legal reasons.

Eleven people were hanged in prisons across Punjab on November 15 and six others won reprieves through agreements with the families of their murder victims. Islamic laws permit the relatives of the deceased to pardon the condemned person or to receive blood money as compensation. Miss Bhutto decided when she took office in 1988 to stop executions and committed the sentences of many prisoners on death row to life imprisonment. Capital punishment was reintroduced in April by Mr Sharif to try to stem rising violence. (Reuters)

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Gun attack mars new hopes of peace talks by ANC and Inkatha

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN IN JOHANNESBURG

WHILE the announcement yesterday of a possible summit between Nelson Mandela and Chief Mangosuthu Buthezi raised hopes for peace in South Africa, violence flared again in Soweto when at least 36 people were injured by a group of men who opened fire on commuters before fleeing in a minibus. Six people have been admitted to hospital in a critical condition.

Colonel Tienie Halgryn, the police spokesman, said the gunmen boarded a train at Miamankunzi station shortly after dawn. They attacked commuters with "firearms, pangas (machetes), sharp instruments and stones" before fleeing in a minibus. Security guards at the Miamankunzi station fired shots in an attempt to ward off the attackers, but made no arrests.

Hundreds of people have

been killed or injured in attacks on Johannesburg commuter trains, a spillover from township wars which have mainly pitted supporters of the ANC against Inkatha.

In the past week, police have stopped 30 Soweto trains at random and searched 200,000 commuters in a renewed effort to stop the violence.

In the Johannesburg suburb of Sandton a meeting of representatives of all 19 signatories to last year's national peace accord gave themselves a standing ovation after a meeting where the ANC and Inkatha agreed that their leaders, Mr Mandela and Chief Buthezi, should meet to talk of peace.

Delicate shuttle diplomacy by John Hall, a prominent businessman who chairs the committee established by the accord, finally bore fruit at the meeting. He has spent much time negotiating between Chief Buthezi in Umtata, the KwaZulu capital, and Mr Mandela, trying to iron out their differences, and yesterday he announced that the two leaders would hold a "bilateral meeting as soon as possible".

Thabo Mbeki, a senior member of the ANC executive, told the conference that a multiparty meeting would also be on the agenda of the two leaders. This addresses one of Chief Buthezi's key complaints, that the future of the country must not be settled by bilateral meetings between the major players, but in a broader forum.

Frank Mdlalose, the national chairman of Inkatha, described the discussions as "thorough, practical and held without rancour", and hoped for a speedy resumption of discussions after each side had reported back.

In Durban, the ANC completed a three-day meeting of its national executive, after which Mr Mandela announced that a channel would be set up between the two groups to discuss the issues that have been preventing a meeting. Mr Mandela had drawn up a list of preconditions a list of preconditions virtually amounted to an unconditional surrender by Chief Buthezi of positions he had held since the meeting be-

tween the ANC and the government two months ago.

Mr Mandela insisted that before he would meet him the Inkatha chief would have to agree to banning the carrying of cultural weapons and to the fencing of the hostels in the townships which have been a source of conflict. These were agreed between the ANC and the government, but rejected by Inkatha.

Chief Buthezi demonstrated his defiance of the agreement by organising marches through Johannesburg and Durban in which knobkerries, assegais and spears were flourished. He also asserted that Inkatha members would tear down any fences erected. He said that Mr Mandela's list of preconditions left him "quite appalled".

However, it will be up to Mr Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, the only Zulu on the ANC executive, to negotiate terms for the meeting with Inkatha representatives that will deal with the preconditions and Chief Buthezi's list of items which must be on the agenda. No date has been set for the meeting.

Mr Hall also said yesterday that he had been mandated to call a summit of the signatories to the peace accord, to advance the cause of peace still further. He hoped that it would be called before the end of the year.

During its meeting the ANC executive also endorsed the strategy document approved by the national working committee last week. The document envisages a power-sharing government of national unity, even after elections for a transitional government have been held.

Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC general secretary, said at the end of the meeting that his organisation would do all in their power to ensure that democratic elections took place in South Africa within the next nine to 12 months. "It is possible to achieve this by next year," he said.

Death threat: Eugene Terre Blanche, head of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, told hundreds of supporters in Durban that, if the ANC tries to confiscate white farmland in future, Mr Mandela would be killed. (AP)



Preventive action: a policeman with a shotgun forces his way onto a train carrying ANC militants in the Kaitshong township on the outskirts of Johannesburg in an attempt to curb inter-faction violence, but 36 were wounded yesterday, six seriously, in another train attack

Dissident is released on probation

Peking: Bao Zunxin, 55, a prominent dissident imprisoned for five years in 1989 for plotting to overthrow the Chinese government, was released yesterday "on probation", more than 18 months early (Catherine Sampson writes).

Mr Bao, a philosopher, is the first Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrator to be freed before the end of his sentence. There is speculation that this may be followed by the release of others who are sick or who have "repented" sufficiently.

Bones found

Bangkok: The skeletons of seven Asian slaves who helped to build the infamous "Death Railway" for the Japanese during the second world war have been discovered during the excavation of a car park in Kancharaburi, 75 miles northwest of Bangkok. (Reuters)

Sale withdrawn

Athens: The Christina, the legendary pirate ship, belonging to the late Greek shipping tycoon, Aristotle Onassis, has been withdrawn from sale for the second time, due to a lack of interest. The Greek government had hoped the yacht would fetch £3 million.

Mediator dies

Miami: Rafael Garcia Herreiros, the Colombian priest who won International fame last year and was nominated for the Nobel peace prize when he acted as mediator in the surrender of Pablo Escobar, the cocaine baron, has died in Bogota aged 85.

Malta devalues

Valletta: Malta has devalued its lira by 10 per cent against all foreign currencies with immediate effect in an effort to keep its exports and tourism competitive. John Dalli, the minister of finance, told the parliament in a budget debate. (Reuters)

Danger flight

Tokyo: A 52-year-old Japanese man is making a dangerous and unauthorised solo attempt to cross the Pacific from Japan to the United States in a box hanging from 26 helium-filled balloons, in defiance of transport ministry objections. (Reuters)

Clinton's Senate gamble fails

Victory in Georgia cheers Republicans

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

IN A setback that has taken some of the lustre off the Democratic election victory, Wyche Fowler, the Democratic senator, has been narrowly defeated in a Senate run-off in Georgia by Paul Coverdell, the Republican challenger and former Peace Corps director.

Under Georgia law a second Senate election became necessary when neither candidate won 50 per cent of the vote on November 3, although Mr Fowler gained about 30,000 more votes than his opponent in the first election. In what Democrats were already calling a "cruel irony", Mr Coverdell squeaked into the Senate with a majority of just 16,000 out of 1.2 million votes cast, or 51 per cent to 49 per cent.

President-elect Bill Clinton took what some in his party regarded as a gamble by campaigning on behalf of Mr

Fowler in Georgia on Monday. Yesterday Republicans were hailing Mr Coverdell's victory as a blow to the incoming administration.

The pro-Republican Washington Times claimed that the Georgia election had caused "Bill Clinton to flunk a test of his own political coattails".

Mr Clinton made a personal plea to Georgians to re-elect Mr Fowler to help "break this gridlock in Washington", and their refusal to do so is being seen by Republicans as an indication that, while they lost the presidential race, their message is still popular.

Mr Fowler was probably defeated as much by voter apathy and the weather as by a resurgence of Republican support, after a battle which hinged on which side could entice, persuade or cajole more of the election-weary Georgia voters to go to the polls. The vote on Tuesday

was about one-third of the turnout for the presidential election three weeks ago, thanks to a combination of driving rain, "election burn-out" and the negative tone of both campaigns.

The Clinton camp denied that the result reflected badly on the president-elect and George Stephanopoulos, the communications director, defended Mr Clinton's decision to support an uncertain, and ultimately losing, candidate.

It sent an important signal, Mr Stephanopoulos said. "If people fight for Clinton, they will fight for them."

James Carville, who orchestrated Mr Clinton's successful presidential campaign, said: "I think that the risk was to do nothing. If you're going to be president, you've got to fight for something."

Mr Coverdell said his victory was the work of supporters "who stepped forward in

this election season and said: 'We want change, we want common sense, we want someone in Washington who came from the workplace'."

Mr Coverdell, who was appointed by President Bush to run the Peace Corps in 1989, successfully mobilised Republican support in the suburbs of Georgia, while Mr Fowler's traditional Democratic supporters in urban areas apparently proved harder to muster.

A Fowler victory would have enabled the Democrats to add an important extra seat to their majority in the Senate. Democrat Kent Conrad is almost certain to take the place of the late senator, Quentin Burdick, in North Dakota on December 4; this would leave the Democrats with the 57-43 majority they have had for the past two years.

Leading article, page 17

New group challenges Miyazawa

FROM JOANNA PYTMAN IN TOKYO

KENICHI Ohmae, Japan's most famous business and management pundit, yesterday launched a new political pressure group designed to trigger a "citizen's revolution" and to end the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) 40-year grip on national politics.

Named Heisei Isshin no Kai (Reform of Heisei Group) after the current Heisei era, Mr Ohmae's grassroots organisation hopes to attract a million individual members. Using their 10,000-yen (€50) subscriptions, Mr Ohmae hopes to raise enough money to endorse 50 enlightened MPs from any of the existing parties. "They will eventually form their own party to change this country in the 21st century," he said.

"The current LDP and opposition socialist party axis is obsolete. Existing parties have completed their role of building up Japan since the war. Unfortunately Japan still has a political system which is suitable for a developing country. We are offering a third, middle-of-the-road choice that will serve the interests of the people rather than the special interests of the current administration," he said.

His ideological platform espouses "people sovereignty", decentralised regional government, market deregulation, an emphasis on Asia-Pacific diplomacy and a new constitution "with global responsibilities". Mr Ohmae is chairman of the Japanese operations of McKinsey and Co, the management consultants, and is well-known in business circles through his prolific authorship of 40 books in the past 20 years, and his regular television appearances as a management guru. He was named recently as Japan's most influential opinion former.

Few people expect Reform of Heisei to pull off any significant challenge to the well-entrenched LDP, led by Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister. The party has retained power thanks to financial support from big business. But the new group could act as a focus of discontent for younger politicians within the LDP who are prevented from introducing true reforms by their elders.

Sex and inflation end the UN honeymoon in Cambodia

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PHNOM PENH

When they first came to Cambodia a year ago, United Nations soldiers were welcomed as liberators. Dozens of Cambodians gathered outside the UN compounds just to gaze at them. "I want to look and look until I have my fill," a man holding his son in his arms said outside an Australian billeting.

But as more and more UN blue berets, flash with dollars, have flooded into this war-ravaged, less than Third World country where the per capita income is barely \$150 (about £100) a year, inflation has run rampant. Inevitably, disillusionment with the UN has become apparent.

Vietnamese filles de joie, attracted by the plentiful lucre, are pouring into Cambodia from their own impoverished country and the incidence of venereal disease among some UN troops was described by one UN official as "astounding". A German field hospital was at one stage treating 40 cases a day.

"Nothing can prepare you for the UN presence," said a

foreign businessman who had been away for six months. "UN personnel are omnipresent, and many of them don't seem to be doing very much."

True or not, the streets of Phnom Penh, which has a population of one million, are packed with white-painted UN four-wheel drive vehicles, each of which seems to have only one passenger, usually a UN bureaucrat or soldier. In rural areas, UN troops are busy, but hundreds of large off-duty young men in T-shirts and shorts in the capital have time on their hands.

Apart from their salaries, the 22,000 UN personnel are paid subsistence allowances of \$148 a day, so soldiers, often unsophisticated young men from such countries as Poland and Bulgaria, have money to burn.

Both foreign and Cambodian women have complained of sexual harassment, and 167 members of non-government relief agencies (NGOs), have sent an open letter to Yasushi Akashi, the Japanese head of the UN Transitional

Authority in Cambodia (Untac), complaining of a lack of sensitivity to Cambodian culture on the part of some UN troops. "We feel a sense of outrage at the unacceptable behaviour of some male Untac personnel," the letter said.

Mr Akashi, 61, did not help matters at a meeting with representatives of 75 NGOs, not renowned for their sense of humour. He told his horrified listeners that "18-year-old hot-blooded soldiers", who had been enduring hardships in the field, had a right to a few beers and to chase after "young beautiful beings of the opposite sex". In the wake of the predictable outcry, Untac has appointed a community relations officer, a woman, to handle public complaints.

In an interview yesterday, Mr Akashi admitted that some UN troops had been sent home, but defended his speech. "At the time I had to defend our soldiers. The behaviour of a very small minority should not colour people's

perception of Untac as a whole." But much damage has already been done.

The World Health Organisation here has reported that 75 per cent of people giving blood in the capital are infected with HIV. Whether or not UN soldiers have anything to do with that is debatable, but they have been hurriedly issued with condoms and told not to park their UN vehicles outside brothels.

Part of the problem stems from the fact that the UN operation is bogged down through the unwillingness of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge to participate in the peace process. As a result, thousands of UN troops in Phnom Penh are idle.

"Soldiers coming from a country like Bulgaria, which has not participated in the UN operation before and where the people are very poor, are vulnerable here," one diplomat said. But more sophisticated Western troops are not altogether innocent. Two



Akashi: defended troops' carousing

British soldiers have already been repatriated, one of them for drunken brawling.

In their open letter to Mr Akashi, the NGOs said that, while foreign women could complain, Cambodians felt intimidated by the UN troops, who they originally thought had come to protect them from the warring factions here. "They don't know where to seek help if sexual favours are demanded," one

foreign relief agency representative said.

Unlike Vietnam and Thailand, where the sex scene is free-wheeling, Cambodia, even after years of war and Khmer Rouge rule, is still a deeply conservative society.

However, it is not only matters of drinking and sex that dismay has been provoked. There is also the matter of inflation. The prices of staples like beef, pork and rice have in some cases risen 500 per cent in the past few months. The value of the riel, 600 to the dollar six months ago, is now 2,050 to the dollar.

The UN itself claims its presence has not had such a negative effect on inflation. And Untac has done much good: 181,000 refugees have been repatriated in the past few months, and more than a million voters have been registered for next year's UN-supervised elections.

But the honeymoon between Cambodians and the UN is over, at least in this capital.

Computerisation and competition are replacing the human — some would say inhuman — face of high street banking. Paul Barker reports

Trouble down at the bank

When Maureen Jameson started work as a bank clerk, "it was like God was in his office. The managers all looked like your father. They still came to work in bowler hats and pinstripes."

That was only 30 years ago. Already it seems like something out of John Galsworthy. In the mornings, Mrs Jameson's first job was to clean pen nibs, change the ink, put out clean blotters. "When people sat waiting to see the manager, they talked in whispers." It was like chapel.

Bank managers used to put the fear of God into people. His financial vicar in the high street. Now they are at the receiving end. "There is a great deal of fear, fear of the unknown," says Bryan Turton, a Manchester bank manager on secondment to the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union. At golf clubs, on weekdays, you can't move for them. Once, banks paid subscriptions so that managers could, in Mr Turton's words, "associate with solicitors, businessmen and people like that". Now, the golf is how they fill out their days.

This week, Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland both announced plans for further staff cuts. The erosion has gone on relentlessly since boom turned to slump. In 1990, for example, Barclays had 84,500 clerks and managers. Now it has 75,000. A further 15,000 were due to go by 1995. This week the cut-back was increased, to 18,000.

The classic bank manager, in many people's minds, is Arthur Lowe's Captain Mainwaring, from *Dad's Army*: a man with a face (and body) like a potato, fussing with his glasses, edgy about his social position.

One of the few bank managers in English literature is Roland Gwatkin, in Anthony Powell's semi-autobiographical novel-sequel, *A Dance to the Music of Time*.

For the paperback of *The Valley of Bones*, the novel in which Gwatkin first appears, the cartoonist Marc Bower drew a cover portrait of him. He is a thinner, taller version of Mainwaring, captain's swaggle stick under his arm, small moustache, the neb of his officer's cap barely hiding a worried frown. We are in the

Pinstripe soldiers: Arthur Lowe (left), the bank manager turned Home Guard, and John LeMesurier in *Dad's Army*

presence of a stereotype. Gwatkin was, says Nicholas Jenkins (Powell's alter ego, as an over-age phoney war second lieutenant), "something of a martinet, a trifle unapproachable to his subordinates... above all, a man dedicated to duty". In the company

office, Gwatkin reproduced bank manager routine. As messages came in, "he marked each item with the date in the inked letters of the company's rubber stamp, himself initialling the centre of its circular mauve impression... often wryly smiling as he

remarked: 'It becomes a habit'. Anything Gwatkin thought confidential went into a large cashbox, of which he kept the key, and stowed in a green steel cupboard, also locked. There was "a faint but distinct sense of absolute power".

But the bank manager's power base is crumbling. From 2,900 branches in the early 1980s, Barclays today has 2,290. It will be down to 1,900 in 1995. With cash dispensers now installed in virtually every shopping mall, another routine task of a high street bank has dwindled. In 1988, Barclays recruited 12,000 new staff. Last year it took on 1,500. One thing is unchanged, though: only 175 were graduates.

Like thousands of others, Mrs Jameson — at 46 one of the very rare women branch managers — came in after O-levels. "I really wanted to join the police. I passed the exam, but they said to wait till I was 18. So I went to the bank. It seemed a nice job. You dealt with the public."

The old-style bank manager often rose to power through the tradition of Bug-gins's turn. "As an assistant manager," says Barry Ingham, who retired early from running a Liverpool bank, "you could work out how many years it would be before you made it."

Once arrived, however, he had some real autonomy. He was supposed to cultivate the right people, and bring their business in. But there was no cold wind of competition. "We didn't worry whether we made a profit," Mrs Jameson recalls. "We just assumed we did."

Banks did not do mort-

gages. Building societies did not do personal loans. Local managers politely referred customers across the road. "In my early days," says Alan Hampson, laid off last year from the Royal Bank of Scotland after 34 years' service at the age of 51, "if a manager sold an insurance policy, he kept the commission himself. I knew one man who never touched his bank salary."

Meanwhile, the manager sang in the local choir, was Hon. Treasurer of the cricket club, and perhaps joined the police inspector and the bigger shopkeepers in the mysteries of the Masonic lodge.

Like many men controlling even small power-zones, managers deluded themselves about how other people saw them. In 1985, Gallup asked respondents which groups they trusted. Bank managers polled well down the list, below solicitors, pegging in with teachers. (Doctors were easily top. Estate agents and MPs came bottom.) But at least, if a man running a small business went in to the local manager, he felt he was talking to a someone who could take a decision. This is less and less true. Change was precipitated by the Financial Services Act, 1986. The high street bank became a kind of shop, not a kind of club. Even the architecture, the social geography, changed. Once, 80 per cent of floor space was for staff, 20 per cent for customers. Now they are making it open-plan, which is "customer-friendly". In Mr Hampson's words, "It became sell, sell, sell."

"The major banks all signed up as distributors for insurance companies," says Jeremy Mitchell, the consumer policy consultant and a former director of the National Consumer Council. "It changed the manager's status. You should never trust a bank manager now to give you the best advice on insurance. He can only push the products of one company."

Banks often present themselves, especially in advertising, as if the old ethos of closeness the community still held true. The bank manager is shown walking down the high street, saying, "Hello, Mrs Jones. This is increasingly, nonsense. There is no such consumer-contact."

The new-style manager is a salesman. "All the talk is of cost-containment," Mr Turton says. "Once it took 70p to bring in every £1 of business. It's being driven down towards 60p."

At her TSB branch, in Denton, Greater Manchester, Mrs Jameson has sales meetings weekly, and a daily review. "It's all about the organisation and motivation of a sales team," she says. "Go

into Marks & Spencer and you see the same thing."

In the first flush of the new salesmanship, most high street banks set managers ever-higher "credit targets" — loans to press on customers. Notoriously, this went sour. "From pillar of the community we've become Public Enemy No 1," Mr Hampson says.

Now regional managers wield greater control, through computers. "Customers are credit-scored," Mr Hampson says, "according to your credit cards, your address, whether you're married or single. Then the computer decides. It takes the fun out of lending."

At more and more high street banks, there isn't a manager. The bank is in a cluster of six or seven, reporting to a single key branch. Specialist managers come out locally by appointment. At the same time, much routine work has been taken off into computerised "customer service centres". In Greater Manchester, a single TSB centre feeds 90 branches.

Computers reshape firms. "They create a flatter hierarchy of jobs," says Bill Daniel, the author of *Workplace Industrial Relations and Technical Change*, "with fewer levels of supervision."

In a factory, the production manager keeps tabs personally on the work rate. The salesman becomes a defunct. The old-style bank manager is in the same squeeze. He finds himself "over-qualified (or too expensive) for today's job. No fancy titles, they just empty their desks into a bin liner," Mr Ingham says. Goodbye, Mr Mainwaring.

Mr Ingham rhymes the death of the network of loyalty and solidarity. "You went into it as a job for life," he says. But he admits it could not have carried on, Bug-gins's turn and all. "You may even start to get more women managers," he says. "I've never regarded banking as a very masculine occupation. It was more of a gentleman's club."

Women who make up two-thirds of the staff were only tolerated. They were expected to leave if they got married or fell pregnant.

Even now, Mrs Jameson says, "some people walk through the door and say, 'Oh dear, a woman'. Others say, 'Good, a woman'. That all fades away when they talk to you. But I was at a meeting of 40 TSB managers last week. I was the only woman. Rome wasn't built in a day."

"Everything changes," she says. "Once the job was all about adding up columns of figures and ruling lines across pages. The computers do that now. We're a retail outlet, not a temple of doom and gloom. I think it's progress."

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

School Examination Results

For the first time the Government has published tables showing the public examination results for all maintained secondary schools in England, as promised in the Parent's Charter.

The tables give the results for each school, together with the local and national averages and also include brief details about the type of school listed. Information for independent schools is given if they have chosen to be included.

The results have been published to give parents information on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved in our schools.

The tables for each local area have been produced as a free booklet to help parents make an informed choice about the most appropriate school for their children's secondary education.

All primary and middle schools will be distributing the booklet to parents of all pupils who will be transferring to secondary school in the 1993/94 school year.

Local Education Authority Code numbers	
AVON 901	DONCASTER 371
BARKING & DAGENHAM 301	DORSET 912
BARNET 302	DUDLEY 332
BARNSELY 370	DURHAM 913
BEDFORDSHIRE 902	EALING 915
BERKSHIRE 903	EAST SUSSEX 914
BEXLEY 303	ENFIELD 308
BIRMINGHAM 330	ESSEX 915
BOLTON 350	GATESHEAD 390
BRADFORD 380	GLOUCESTERSHIRE 916
BRENT 304	GREENWICH 203
BROMLEY 305	HACKNEY 204
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE 904	HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM 205
BURY 351	HAMPSHIRE 917
CALDERDALE 381	HARINGEY 309
CAMBRIDGESHIRE 905	HARROW 310
CAMDEN 202	HAVERING 311
CHESTER 906	HEREFORD & WORCESTER 918
CORP OF LONDON	HERTFORDSHIRE 919
(combined with Westminster)	HILLINGDON 312
CLEVELAND 907	HOUNSLOW 313
CORNWALL 908	HUMBERSIDE 920
COVENTRY 331	ISLE OF WIGHT 921
CROYDON 306	ISLES OF SCILLY 420
CUMBRIA 909	ISLINGTON 206
DERBYSHIRE 910	KENSINGTON & CHELSEA 207
DEVON 911	KENT 922
	KINGSTON UPON THAMES 314

KIRKLEES 382	SEFTON 343
KNOWSLEY 340	SHEFFIELD 373
LAMBETH 208	SHROPSHIRE 932
LANCASHIRE 923	SOLI HULL 334
LEEDS 383	SOMERSET 933
LEICESTERSHIRE 924	SOUTH TYNESIDE 393
LEWISHAM 209	SOUTHWARK 210
LINCOLNSHIRE 925	STAFFORDSHIRE 934
LIVERPOOL 341	STOCKPORT 936
MANCHESTER 352	SUFFOLK 935
MERTON 315	SUNDERLAND 394
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE 391	SURREY 936
NEWHAM 316	SUTTON 919
NORFOLK 927	TAMESIDE 357
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE 928	TOWER HAMLETS 211
NORTHUMBRIA 929	TRAFFORD 385
NORTH TYNESIDE 392	WAKEFIELD 384
NORTH YORKSHIRE 926	WALSALL 335
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE 930	WALTHAM FOREST 320
OLDHAM 353	WANDSWORTH 212
OXFORDSHIRE 931	WARWICKSHIRE 937
REDBRIDGE 317	WESTMINSTER 213
RICHMOND UPON THAMES 318	WEST SUSSEX 938
ROCHDALE 354	WIGAN 359
ROTHERHAM 372	WILTSHIRE 939
ST HELENS 342	WIRRAL 344
SALFORD 355	WOLVERHAMPTON 336
SANDWELL 333	

Please refer to the areas listed to select the most appropriate booklet(s) required. If you are unsure of the name of your local or neighbouring Local Education Authority (LEA) contact your local school or library.

If you wish to obtain a complete national set of the tables please write to Michael George, Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Copies of the booklet are also available at main public libraries and can be inspected at all maintained schools other than infant and nursery.

Alternatively, a copy of the free booklet for any area can be obtained by completing the coupon below, by writing to Public Examination Results 1992, Freepost (BS 523/81), Bristol BS3 3YY or by calling **FREEPHONE 0800 211 112**.

To: Public Examination Results 1992, Freepost (BS 523/81), Bristol BS3 3YY. **FREEPHONE 0800 211 112**.

I would like to receive a copy of the tables for the following areas (Please write in the area code number/s)

Name Address Postcode

DFE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Coke, a burning issue

The real thing continues to make the news

When General Norman Schwarzkopf accepted the Iraqi surrender at the end of the Gulf war, a can of Diet-Pepsi sat next to him on the table, photographed for all the world to see. As one Coca-Cola executive was reported as saying at the time: "It just didn't look right. It was our place to be on that table. Our right. We are the symbol of America. We represent what America is. We are success in action. Ours is the image of international co-operation, a way of life."

After some years in the cold, the world's most popular soft drink has finally re-emerged this week as the world's most popular symbol of American culture. French farmers chose Coca-Cola, 106 years-old this year, as the focus of their protest against what they consider to be an American-dominated trade deal with the EC, agreed last Friday. On Monday they burnt rubber tyres outside a Coca-Cola plant in the southern Paris suburb of Grigny. A mob set fire to a Coke vending machine at another plant in Besançon. Not since the accusations of Third World "Coca-colonisation" in the 1960s has the multinational company been under such attack.

But have the farmers got it right? Does Coca-Cola really represent America to the rest of the world? What of the Mac and Stripes? Peter Stokes, the external affairs director of Coca-Cola UK, is unmoved. "We have a demonstrable commitment to each of the 185 countries we operate in. We are very much local in the sense that our operations are locally run," he says. "If any-

one wants to see us in another way, on that I can't comment."

In Barcelona this year, Coca-Cola plastered the Olympic village with signs saying: "Drink Coca-Cola" as part of its regular Olympic million dollar sponsorship. Only the signs were in Catalan. Even though few visiting athletes were able to understand them, they tickled the locals' fancy. "A lot of people here would rather see a Coke sign than a Spanish flag," said kiosk owner Josip Guerra, in *The Times*. So Coke can get it right.

But mistakes are made. Recent attempts to weave Coke into non-American cultures have brought accusations of cultural imperialism. Last August, Coca-Cola ran a television advertisement in Italy showing the columns of the Parthenon in Athens shaped like a Coke bottle, under the caption: "A classic drink against thirst". Outraged, the Greek culture minister Melina Mercouri said: "It is a vandalism and an insult to the classic masterpiece." Coca-Cola apologised to Greece and withdrew the ad.

The real point is that Coca-Cola is not American, but international. Like many multinational companies, the more it sells abroad, the more it is owned abroad, so much so that "abroad" becomes rather meaningless. In France, Coca-Cola is almost 100 per cent locally produced, except, of course, for that secret magic ingredient, which is imported from the United States.

It then sponsored the Irish Football Association, a league that included some Protestant teams. An American Catholic priest, Father Sean McManus, the head of the US-based Irish National Caucus, immediately accused Coca-Cola of anti-Catholic bias. He organised a St Patrick's Day television campaign against Coca-Cola, called for a boycott and put at risk a market of 43 million Irish Americans.

However, things are looking up. In India, this year opened its doors to Coke for the first time since 1978. Years of economic protectionism and anti-American sentiment had kept it banned. In the Middle East, sales are rising. Much to pleasure of Pepsi, its arch rival, Coke was banned in Arab states for 23 years because it had a factory in Israel. But, as part of the cooling political climate, the boycott has now been lifted. Coke is now attacking the Arab market with the same vigour with which it earlier courted Israel. When it came off the Jordanian blacklist this June, riots broke out at the only shop in Amman selling Coke. For the Arab world, Coke is for drinking and flags are for burning.

The real point is that Coca-Cola is not American, but international. Like many multinational companies, the more it sells abroad, the more it is owned abroad, so much so that "abroad" becomes rather meaningless. In France, Coca-Cola is almost 100 per cent locally produced, except, of course, for that secret magic ingredient, which is imported from the United States.

JAMES LANDALE



Protest: French farmers burn a Coke machine



Hoarse in Guildhall

THE Queen struggled with her voice at Guildhall but it sounded as if it might degenerate beyond hoarseness and either lapse into a near-soundless whisper (aphonia) or produce the unnatural squeals of an adolescent.

she would acquire a considerable resistance to infection. But stress, strain and unhappiness such as would be generated by an "annus horribilis" together with the Windsor damp would make any patient more vulnerable to infection.

In laryngitis the mucosa of the larynx and the laryngeal cords are red and swollen, so that the cords do not vibrate as they should, hence the change in voice quality. It is hard work speaking with a hoarse voice, and the tiny muscles which are attached to the now-heavy laryngeal cords soon tire, so that the more the patient has to speak the worse the voice becomes.

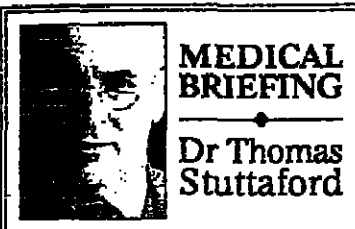
Foot and heart disease

THE National Trust is renovating the Norfolk tomb of the second Earl of Buckinghamshire who had, at various times, been ambassador to St Petersburg and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Buckinghamshire met an unfortunate end 200 years ago when, aged 70, he plunged his gouty foot into cold water in an attempt to relieve the pain. He promptly died, a death always attributed by historians to gout.

Gout is associated with coronary heart disease in men but not, surprisingly, in women, and the sudden immersion of a limb into cold water is known to be almost as good a way as the treadmill, or exercise bicycle, of demonstrating coronary arterial disease. Lord Buckinghamshire, in fact, died of a heart attack, and only indirectly of gout.

In gout there are recurrent acute attacks of arthritis which follow the deposition of crystals of monosodium urates from the blood and other body fluids into the joints, or around the tendons and joint spaces.

Gout is very rare in men before puberty, or women before the menopause. The first attack of gout in men — it is eight times more common in men than women — usually occurs between the ages of 30 and 60 and is most often confined to one joint. In 70 per cent of



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttford

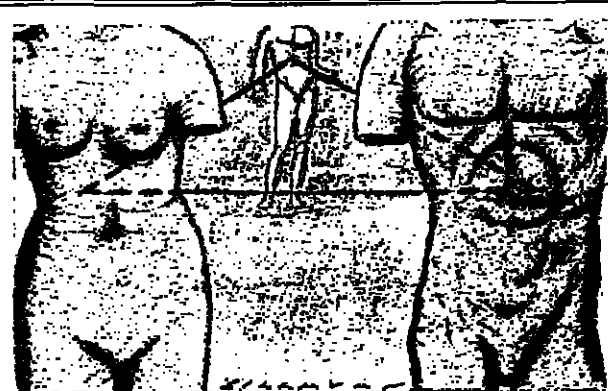
cases the big toe joint. The frequency with which the big toe joint is initially attacked makes it easy to overlook the diagnosis when it occurs in other joints, but any joint, even the neck or pelvic joints, can be affected, and in particular the ankles, knees, wrists or elbows.

Many people with minor attacks of gout may notice only some transitory pain in the small joints of their hands and feet; gout has a tendency to attack joints already damaged by some other cause. Patients may have had raised serum uric acid blood levels (the marker for gout) for many years before developing joint pains. When the joints are involved they become hot and swollen and the acute condition may take up to a few weeks to get better. In time, the repeated attacks are followed by joint damage and by persistent arthritis. Gout is now a largely preventable

disease. Once the acute symptoms have been treated with either colchicine, which is potentially toxic, or an anti-rheumatic drug, and the acute attack has been dealt with, then long-term prophylactic treatment with allopurinol, which lowers the blood uric acid levels, can be started. Initially allopurinol may precipitate an acute attack so it is as well to combine it for a month or two with an anti-rheumatic drug.

Twenty per cent of patients with gout develop kidney stones, while kidney disease and hypertension are frequent complications of the untreated disease. There is an association with both diabetes, and as in Lord Buckinghamshire's case, heart disease. Obesity and heavy drinking may precipitate attacks in susceptible people, particularly if the drinking follows a period of starvation. Nothing could be more unwise than for a man with a tendency to gout to go without lunch, and then to have a few drinks on the way home.

In the past, heavy drinkers — and Lord Buckinghamshire must have drunk for Britain in the embassies of the world — had an additional hazard. Wine stored in old-fashioned wine bottles became contaminated by lead, and lead poisoning from wine was a frequent cause of gout in earlier centuries.



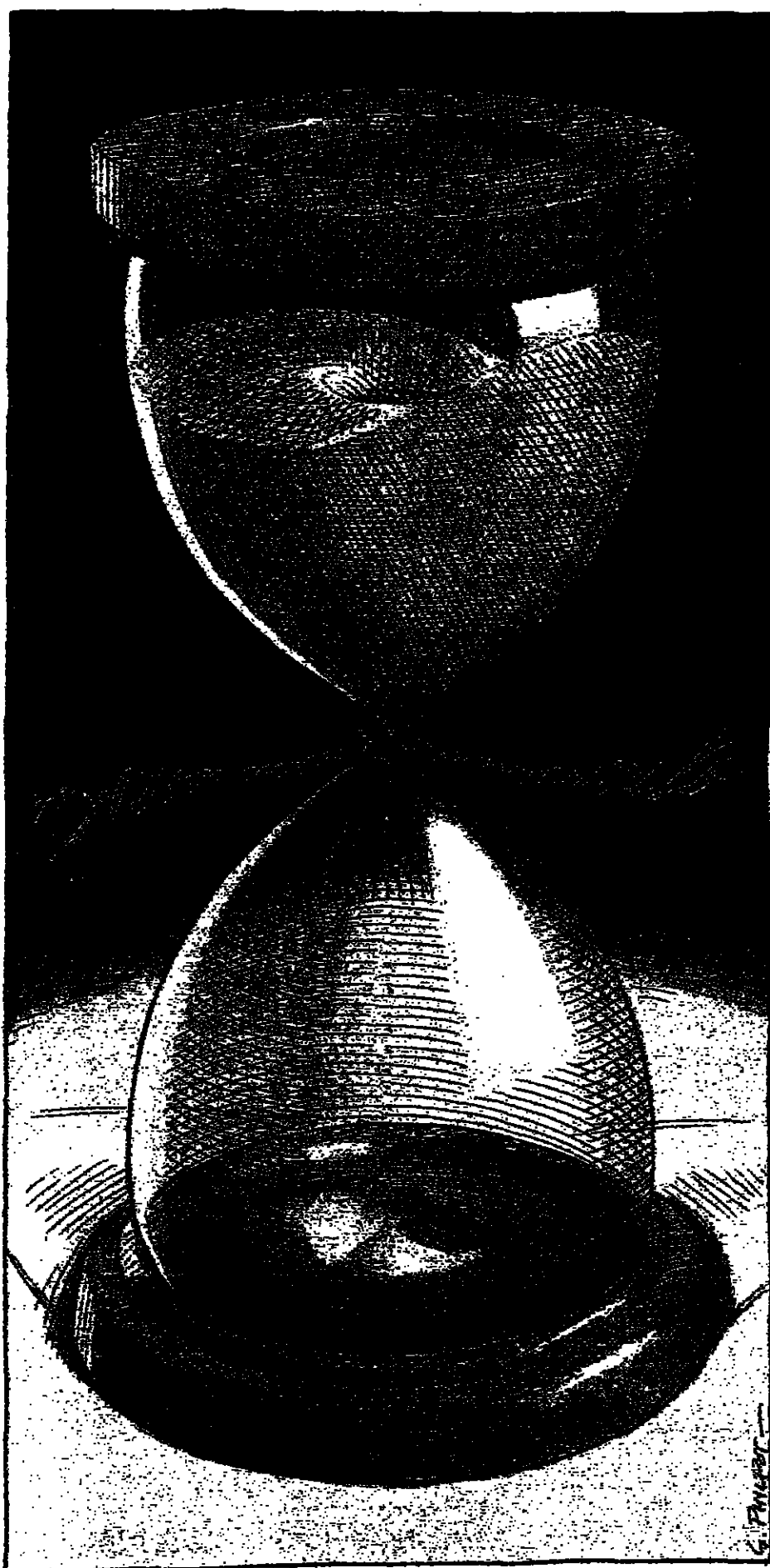
Dividing to multiply

NATURE is generous with its provision of essential organs: men reproduce without trouble with one testis, people live unimpaired lives with one kidney and can damage a large portion of their liver without going into liver failure. The liver, thanks to a very special growth hormone, has a great ability to regenerate. The liver transplant team in Birmingham, operating at the Children's Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, have made full use of this when they divided one liver

for transplantation into two terminally ill patients.

Both patients were in deep coma, and needed ventilation, sugar therapy and sedation to control the cerebral damage. The liver, which had been flown down from Glasgow, was divided according to the size of the recipients: a girl aged three-and-a-half and a man in his twenties. The first portion was implanted into the child, the second taken in a cool-box to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. If all goes well it will be the first entirely successful split-liver transplant in Britain. The patients should later have a normal sized, normal functioning, if not normal shaped, liver.

Liz Gill reports on the controversy surrounding 'do it yourself' abortion, an American idea that British doctors say should not be welcomed here



THE spectre of the backstreet abortionist has rightly haunted generations of women. But what if a woman could terminate an unwanted pregnancy in the comfort of her own bedroom?

What if the abortionist were not the hag with the knitting needle, but a group of skilled and supportive friends? Would that be an enlightened new way to solve an age-old problem?

About 2,000 American women believe so: they are members of self-help groups who practice the technique of menstrual extraction on each other (see box below).

This *Woman's Book of Choices*, by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer, which details the theory and practice of the technique, is published in this country.

The book is geared to the American situation, but the procedure has worldwide application. It is relevant wherever women need and cannot get abortions," Ms Chalker says.

"Legality is not the same as accessibility. The situation is already difficult in the States, and it is going to get more difficult. Gynaecologists here have really bailed out. Abortion is not profitable, and it brings a lot of harassment."

Ms Chalker, an abortion counsellor and health writer, believes that menstrual extraction, which suction out the contents of the uterus, is both safe and effective. "But it does need skill and training. The way it usually happens is that a group studies the subject in depth — you need to know about anatomy, examination and the sterilisation of equipment — and then find someone to teach them the technique. Some doctors and nurses are prepared to pass on their knowledge. The practitioner needs an apprenticeship of six months to a year, with guidance and supervision."

Doctors learn menstrual extraction as part of specialist gynaecological training. The most common use of the technique is the insertion of inter-uterine devices — only then something is put into the womb, not drawn out — but the procedure may also be used diagnostically in dealing with, for example, menstrual problems where a sample of the endometrium is needed.

Ms Chalker claims that this is not "incredibly complicated stuff. We are not talking about heart surgery. This is something similar in difficulty to, say, self-catheterisation which

Is this a case of self-help gone too far?

is often taught to people, including children, whose bladders are not working."

Extraction, she says, is only appropriate from around the time a period is due, to a couple of weeks after. "A lot of women know they have had unprotected intercourse or there might have been a contraceptive failure. It is also possible to use a pregnancy test which will give a result on the day a period is due."

Some groups confine the procedure, which takes an average of half an hour and requires no drugs, to themselves; others believe it is a service they should offer to outsiders in need. To date its use has not prompted any legal action. "Women who do menstrual extraction believe it is legal because they're not attempting a medical diagnosis of pregnancy," Ms Chalker says. "They are using it prophylactically or they just wanted to get their period. They maintain it is a home healthcare procedure which they have a right to employ."

The authors insist their book is not an abortion handbook. It does, however, contain enough detail for a reader to do the technique and assemble the necessary equipment. "We felt we had to put in the detail so that women could make informed choices but this is in no way a DIY manual. All the groups we know have had to seek out someone to demonstrate what you do."

"One could not perform it on one's self anyway, partly because of the position of the uterus and partly because one cannot get hold of the equipment overnight. Desperate women want an abortion yesterday. They are the ones who will go to the back street abortionist."

British experts appear unconvinced of the merits of menstrual extraction. Dr Fleur Fisher, the head of ethics,

science and information at the British Medical Association, points out that its practice would be illegal in this country: only doctors are allowed to perform abortions. She thinks it is still a backward step even in the legally grey area of using it when a pregnancy has not been confirmed.

"What you're asking women to do is put each other at risk. Introducing anything into the

'I understand women want to take control of their bodies, but this is an over-reaction, this is fetishising control'

uterus is very hazardous. There has to be a very high degree of asepsis to avoid infection. Septicaemia can be fatal. There is also the danger of persistent low-grade infection which might not even be noticeable, but which can lead to tubal damage and infertility.

"The womb becomes soft in pregnancy and it is possible to puncture it. This is less likely with a cannula (the flexible thin plastic tube used in extraction), but it is still a possibility."

Dr Fisher, who had a friend who died after a self-induced abortion, believes women's energies would be better spent pressing for improvement in the existing facilities and the further development of medical as well as surgical solutions. "Abortion is legal here, but it is still difficult in many

areas to get early terminations on the health service. Of the 179,000 a year only 65,000 were done in the first nine weeks and of those only 35 per cent were NHS."

Ian Jones, the director of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, says that unlike America the legal status of abortion in Britain is likely to be secure for the foreseeable future. "Women here have access to good care. I understand the principle of self determination and I can see merit in women having the power to make decisions for themselves but they largely have that power within the law already. I don't think we need recourse to self help groups."

The other thing that concerns me is that various studies have shown that complications or side effects are more likely when the abortion is in inexperienced hands. That difference is shown even between clinics which do them all the time and NHS hospitals which don't do so many, so it would be even more pronounced in these self-help groups. How are they going to gain that wide experience?"

Ann Furedi, the assistant director of the Birth Control Trust, an information resource centre, says: "I don't think menstrual extraction is a positive thing at all. At best it's pretty useless. This is not reclaiming our bodies. I don't think a significant proportion of women want to take abortion into their own hands any more than they want to drill their own teeth. What they want is to go and see someone medically qualified in whom they have confidence."

"One of the reasons menstrual extraction has not taken off as a method of abortion generally is that it has to be done early when it is possible to induce bleeding but miss the pregnancy. It is hard before six weeks to be sure you have effected a complete abor-

tion. The danger would be that women think they are no longer pregnant when in fact they still are."

"But my real objection is that if people think the abortion service is under pressure what they have to do is galvanise their forces to fight for a better one. Anything that smacks of doing it ourselves is dangerous because it lets the NHS off the hook."

Joe Jordan, a spokesman for the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, says: "The procedure is pretty straightforward and safe if you are properly trained but we would have grave reservations about it being done by unskilled hands."

"There may be some psychological benefits for women who fear they may be pregnant but don't know for sure. If they can convince themselves they might not really have been pregnant they might feel less guilty or distressed. But it could also have the opposite effect. At least abortion is a conscious decision. If you never know whether you were or were not pregnant you could brood about it later, especially if you have fertility problems."

For her part, Tara Kaufmann, the co-author of *Unplanned Pregnancy* and a member of the Abortion Law Reform Association's executive, does not believe any such groups exist in this country. "It's an American reaction to an American problem and I don't know anyone who thinks it's a good idea for us."

"I would like to see abortion de-medicalised to some extent. Hospitals make a bit of a meal of it at the moment, you have to see two or three doctors for instance, and there should be more done in local care centres. I understand that women want to take control of their bodies but this is a bit of an over reaction, this is fetishising control."

"I don't think it helps women just to have it done on spec and not to know whether they are pregnant. The procedure of abortion is not the crisis, the crisis is the unplanned pregnancy, whether confirmed or not. In my experience it is important for women to know what's going on and to make their choice. Sometimes the more real an abortion feels, the better the recovery."

● *A Woman's Book of Choices* by Rebecca Chalker and Carol Downer is published today by Four Walls Eight Windows (£8.95).

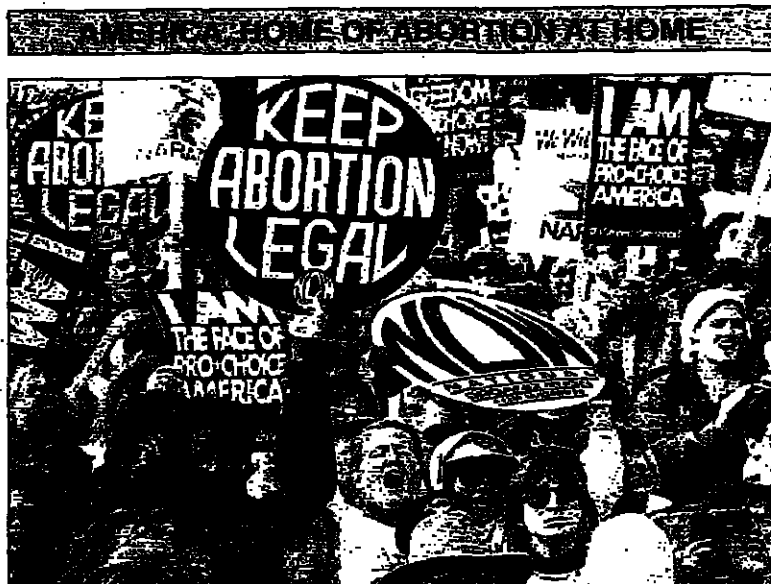
Alternative, underground abortions, which include home menstrual extraction, use of ancient herbal potions and smuggled RU486 pills are being increasingly promoted by some women's groups in America.

When Roe v Wade, the court case which protected abortion, came under threat from the right-wing of the Republican party and fundamentalist Christians in the last few years, there was a concomitant rise in self-help advice. Women toured feminist centres in all states and taught others to perform menstrual extractions with a kit made from items including a jar, plastic tubing and a large syringe.

The technique of home menstrual extraction was invented by a San Diego primary school teacher, Lorraine Rothman, in 1971. She suggested women should not try it as a do-it-yourself operation, but it should be performed by a group of women who had been trained in the method.

Despite the new Clinton administration's support of abortion rights, certain states have laws which make getting an abortion so complicated it is often easier to go outside the area for help. One Quaker women's group has arranged an "underground railroad" to transport women to states where abortion is more accessible.

Carol Downer, the founder of the Federation of Feminist Health Centres, has toured 70 women's centres countrywide explaining menstrual extraction. She is the co-author, with



But some are more legal than others: a pro-choice rally in Washington

Rebecca Chalker, of *A Woman's Book of Choices*, which was published in America in September. She says the method has been tested by more than 10,000 women since 1971, during which time there have been a dozen reported cases of infection — similar to medical abortion — but no deaths. Ms Downer says extraction, usually done within two or three weeks of missing a period, is "a safety net" and

not a first choice if medical abortion is easily available. Others advocate extraction for those who are not pregnant but wish to get rid of an inconvenient period. The upper limit for performing extraction of the contents of the uterus is eight weeks of pregnancy, and American doctors, while warning against operations carried out at home, do say they are often used in developing countries.

At a women's group meeting in New York last month, Ms Downer told *Newsday*, a daily newspaper, that as abortion becomes increasingly inaccessible in rural areas, "we have decided to take things into our own hands. We have to empower ourselves so we do not have to go back to the bad old days."

Planned Parenthood, the mainstream abortion rights advocate, strongly opposes menstrual extraction, primarily because there have been no documented medical trials and lay people would not know what to do in an emergency.

Planned Parenthood would rather the self-help groups campaigned for better access to abortion. After all, the sort of women attending feminist groups in cities are likely to be middle class, educated and quite capable of finding and financing a legitimate hospital abortion. Ms Downer is now trying to reach poorer and rural areas with her lectures, encouraging clandestine extractions in women's living rooms and kitchens.

The home abortion moment is moving according to need. Approved clinics and doctors providing abortions dropped by 11 per cent in the six years before 1988, but in rural areas the loss was 51 per cent. Now, nearly one third of American women live in counties where medical abortion is not available.

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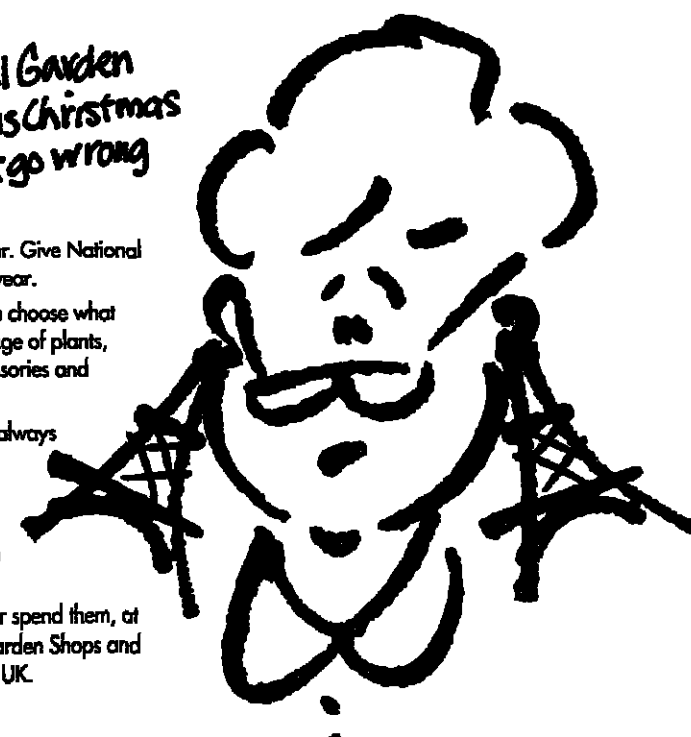
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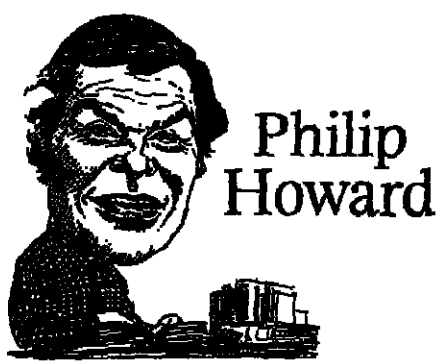


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Philip Howard

■ The Queen, despite an annus horribilis, should get on with the business of life

Life is divided into the horrible and the miserable. *Annus horribilis* is a regal way of putting it. Private emotion expressed publicly, except by show-off enthusiasts and natters who enjoy the public confession of sins, is best left by the shy in the obscurity of a learned language, as the Queen did in her Guildhall speech. It was full of coded references. *The Sun* translated her phrase into the demotic, "One's turn year", for those of its readers without enough Latin to work out that *Caput tuum in ano est* means "You hit the nail right on the head".

Pedants could argue about Her Majesty's Latin. *Horribilis* comes from *horreo*, to bristle, and hence figuratively to shudder with horror. But the more elegant Latin word would be the gerundive, *horrendus*. It is true that Cicero wrote about a *horribilis* public pestilence (referring to a politically incorrect guy). But he also used *horribilis* to mean astonishing, as in a *horribilis* or remarkable alertness.

The Queen's quotation was adapted from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, his early poem in bouncing quatrains referring to the year 1665-6, and dealing with English victories over the Dutch at sea, and then, for the last third, with the Great Fire of London. Dryden, who probably wrote the poem at Charlton in Wiltshire, where he lived during the plague and fire years, invented the phrase of his title. He was a goodish Latinist, at any rate for a Trinity (Cambridge) scholar, and I cannot find *annus mirabilis* anywhere in the ancient authorities.

The happy phrase of *annus mirabilis* was nicked at once by Evelyn, Lord Chesterfield and others, who could recognise something worth plagiarising even if it was only whispered. In the 18th century hacks started to use the converse and not at all golden Latin cliché of *annus horribilis*. It has now become a cliché of preposterous journalists who wish to flaunt their supposed scholarship, though the *Daily Mail* was anachronistic by more than two centuries to suggest that it was invented by *The Times*.

But more interesting than the Queen's Latin semantics is her common superstition. The notion that a horrible time comes measured out in tidy periods like years is deeply engrained in human nature. You can find it in the oldest proverbs in English, from "It never rains but it pours" to "If your luck goes on at this rate you may very well hope to be hanged." Bad luck traditionally comes in the magical but horrible number of threes. King Claudius made the point, with more justification than most, after the killing of his prime minister, his stepson sent into exile for alarming behaviour such as stabbing prime ministers behind arras. Ophelia flipped, the public opinion polls thick and unwholesome (so what else is new?), and Laertes back from France causing trouble and calling for a general election: "When sorrows come, they come not single spies/But in battalions."

In the catalogue of human misery, some years have indeed turned out comparatively scaly. 69AD was not a lot of fun for the Establishment, with four emperors of the civilised world in turn elevated to the purple and then zapped. Their black historian was not kidding when he introduced his piece: "I approach a theme rich in disasters and horrible with battles." He knew what sells papers. Most people hardly noticed.

1066 was an *annus horribilis* for Anglo-Saxons, but pretty damned *mirabilis* if you were a Norman. Those who were around at the time speak of *la douce de la vie* before the horrible year of 1914, after which nothing was ever the same again.

Pessimism, when you get used to it, is as agreeable as optimism. The thing to do, dear Queen, is kick the old *annus horribilis* and black dog in its superstitious tender parts, and get on with the untidy business of life.

The French political system is perilously biased towards the countryside, says Charles Bremner

Politics of the peasantry

France likes to think of itself as the cutting edge of new technology. The claim to modernity is well enough founded. You only have to think of those symbols of prowess, its cars, the TGV high-speed trains, the Minitel home data system, and those successful French-led projects, the Ariane rocket and the Airbus. Unemployment is high and rising, but life is still far better in France than most other countries. It continues to enjoy the highest growth rate of the industrialised powers and it clocked up another trade surplus yesterday.

France is the world's second farm power but its food exports account for only 16 per cent of the total. So why is the whole country, from the Paris intellectual to the normally inarticulate man in the corner café, ready to sympathise when squadrons of farmers descend on their town centres, as they did in Paris and elsewhere yesterday, wreaking havoc on property and the country's economic life? Why is every politician, from Pierre Bérégovoy, the prime minister, downwards, so quick to sign on, publicly at least, to the belief that France's very existence is threatened by a US-inspired agricultural plot against the nefarious anglais.

The answer can be summed up as "la crise". This is shorthand for the cocktail of economic slow-down, atrophying institutions, discredited government, social malaise and fear of the future which has erupted so visibly this year, from the lorry drivers in the summer through the psychodrama of the referendum on the Maastricht treaty to the bloody-minded strikes last week by the drivers of the Paris Metro.

Le Gait, as menacing an English acronym as you could find, has touched the rawest of national nerves at the worst time for a country already prone, as President Mitterrand put it in a moment of reflection last week, to a mood of *désarroi* (helplessness, anxiety and doubt).

Privately some politicians concede that rural reform is ineluctable, that the shake-up in the Common Agricultural Policy this year was a realistic measure which would preserve the livelihoods of the maximum number of small farmers and, bitter as it is, that the Gatt farm agreement will have to be swallowed in the

broader national interest. *Libération*, the bible of the left-leaning, younger urban classes took a solitary leap in this direction yesterday, pointing out that the rhetoric in defence of French agriculture was stuffed with fallacy and falsehood. Such thoughts, however, are regarded as heresy.

The farmers, egged on by the Gaullist and centrist opposition, have whipped up a mood of exaltation and patriotic fury. The argument may be a murky and technical one about oilseed acreage and export subsidies, but the imagery, flashing through television news and spilling with the burning straw bales onto city squares, is utterly emotional. The soul of France is its land, the argument goes. "Sacrifice les agriculteurs", as the CAP reform and Gatt are said to be trying to do, and you destroy the fabric of rural life, the villages and the cherished landscape and replace it with US-dictated fallow or the industrialised "deserts" which have been inflicted on the farmland of America's mid-west.

Two millennia of national

character sit on the tractor with François Mitterrand, an Avignon peasant, as he tells reporters. "Since the days of Vercingetorix and perhaps before that, we have never done anything else but work the land." The myth of the plucky Gaullist *résistant*, more the cartoon Asterix than historical reality, has surged into the national consciousness in the Gatt drama.

Much of France is ignoring the opposition of all the other Community partners and blaming the Anglo-Saxons who are felt to have been responsible for the loss of grandeur over the past two decades. The Hundred Years War and the humiliation of the last war rather than the realities of the Community farm negotiations explain why the Union flag was being so eagerly burnt around France this week and why the farm union proclaimed war on British lorries and not German ones.

The argument has such resonance because the French really are closer to the soil than most

other West Europeans. Generous CAP subsidy has enabled well over a million to keep farming, far more than in any comparable state. But the bond is strengthened politically by the tradition which sees so many ministers and senior politicians also serve as provincial mayors. In addition, the parliamentary upper house, the Senate, is dominated by rural constituencies and acts as the voice of the countryside.

A stronger government in healthier times might have bowed unpopularity, and stood up to the latest *coup de colère* by the *peasants*, but the Socialists, crippled with a loss of authority, are clinging onto what most see as their final months before elections in March. They chose to run with the peasant tide. A change of government is unlikely to provide much relief or firm new leadership since France will still be led by its Socialist president for another two years, unless Mitterrand changes his mind about staying in the office he has held since 1981, or is forced out by illness.

He is now talking in his delphic fashion about modifying the constitution of the Fifth Republic to end the potential for debilitating conflict between weak parliaments and the monarchical chief executive, but no one is holding their breath for action. History shows that it usually takes a violent national trauma to force serious constitutional change on the French.

The threat yesterday of a Community veto may precipitate a European crisis, blowing away the remains of Maastricht, but the inside betting is still that the peasant "jacquerie" will be allowed to run its course while the government plays for time and presses its partners for concessions to soften the blow to its agriculture.

Resigned to defeat, ministers are looking forward to passing the unloved Gatt baby to their successors in March. Since Mitterrand wants to go down in history as one of the architects of European integration, it is hard to see him resorting to the never-used and ultimate community weapon of a veto. In the meantime, the tractor offensive and the war of resistance over agriculture have at least had the beneficial effect of rallying the country behind a rare common cause.

The evil power of rumour

Society's tendency to jump to false conclusions can unleash the most destructive side of human nature, writes Bernard Levin



If, said Voltaire, I was accused of stealing the towers of Notre Dame, I would make a bolt for it at once. Wise man, for my story today (the details are from *The New York Times*) reinforces his wisdom. It begins in Calais, a month or two ago. One day, a child came home from school and said that a man had been taking photographs in the vicinity. That was true: a municipal surveyor had been taking visual notes for a proposed alteration to the buildings in the area. That, I say, was true: in what followed there was not the slightest element of truth to be found, in any form, by any person, at any time. Which is comforting, because what was believed was that scores of children from the local school had been pornographically photographed and abducted, and had thereafter been variously raped, beheaded or eviscerated, or even suffered two or more of these uncomfortable fates.

From the innocent local council employee on a job with a camera, there was an almost immediate quantum leap to the belief that a sinister dark-skinned figure had been enticing children and taking lewd photographs of them. On the same day, the headmaster of the school was called to the door of his office to find an angry crowd of 20 parents, who had taken another and greater quantum leap, saying that throat-cutting, too, was now rife. No evidence of any kind was offered, though the conviction of the now raging parents was absolute.

A few hours and some slit throats later the next quantum was reached: a culprit, Christophe Beddeleem. He was indeed dark-skinned and even pockmarked; he had a record of drug-taking and petty crime, though he had been cured of the drug habit and had come to the area from elsewhere to live with his mother and put all that behind him. No matter: a culprit had been found, and the next stop was clearly a lynching; he fled the neighbourhood and went into hiding.

In an attempt to stem the tide of madness, the local paper pointed out that the police had found no evidence of any wrongdoing, whether by the scapegoat or anyone else. No child was missing; none had been abused; no pornographic pictures had been seen by anyone. Neverthe-

less, when the headmaster of the school arrived next day, he found a crowd of 20 but of 200, some of them equipped with megaphones, and to the substantial variety of infanticidal practices already logged, burning alive had been added.

Gradually, this *folie en masse* died down; presumably the slit throats had been stitched up, the stomachs of the eviscerated victims carefully put back, the missing heads replaced from the local hospital's headbank, and all was peace again - except for the chosen scapegoat, M. Beddeleem, who is still in hiding.

And that is where I come in. For, when I read about the massacre of the innocents, I leaped back 23 years in my

mind, and remembered a story that marches, step by step, beside the story of the Calais rumours.

In May 1969, in Orleans, a whisper began to run through the town: its substance was that there was white-slave traffic going on. The method used was simple: young women going into dress-shops were shepherded into the fitting-cubicles and there drugged by injections. They were kept unconscious, in the shops' cellars till night came, when they were smuggled out and sent abroad to be captive prostitutes.

The rumour began with one, specified, dress-shop called *Dorothée*. It was well known in the town, and had a high reputation for its wares; it had a fitting-room, at the back of the shop, and a basement. The first

rumour was that two women had been found by the police, drugged, in the basement of *Dorothée*; they had been taken to hospital, where they regained consciousness.

The rumour ran through the town like a mad bull: within a few days *Dorothée* had been joined by *Boutique de Sheila*, *Alexandrine*, *Félix*, *Le Petit Bénédicte*, and *D.D.*, all engaging in this dreadful trade. And all six of the shops were owned by Jews.

Unlike Calais, the local newspaper decided not to publish anything about the story, on the ground that publicity about it would spread it further and more rapidly; but like Calais, the police investigated the

rumour and found no evidence of any such goings-on. Again like Calais, no one was reported missing, whether in sinister or explainable circumstances. The Public Prosecutor, too, looked into the story, and naturally found nothing amiss.

Nevertheless, just like Calais, the rumour went into full metastasis: it was claimed that the six shops running the terrible business were linked by underground tunnels (though some of the shops were several hundred yards away from any other), which ultimately ended in the Loire, where boats were waiting nightly to load their human cargo. The next wave was inevitable: since the police, the press, the town Prefect and all the authorities were saying and do-

ing nothing, it was apparent that they had all been bribed. And who had bribed them? Why, obviously, the Jews.

Crowds gathered at the six shops; it was touch and go, one convincing shout, one brick, one crash of glass, and Orleans might have experienced a pogrom. But meanwhile, the forces of reason had at last begun the counter-attack. The two provincial papers broke the story under, respectively, the headlines "An Odious Calumny" and "A Campaign of Defamation", and Paris woke up to what was happening, whereupon *Le Monde*, *L'Aurore*, *L'Express* and *Le Nouvel Observateur* gave the story appropriate coverage. The Bishop of Orleans demanded an end to this "odious calumny"; the political parties denounced the campaign; Jewish and inter-faith organisations took up the cudgels; and, as you would expect of a university, the university ran away and hid.

The greatest conviction of human beings is their belief that they guide themselves and their actions not by impulse, dreams, omens, hunches, guesswork and the ideas of other people, but by reason. This dreadful absurdity has ruined countless millions, and made many billions unhappy, without making even the slightest dent in the original belief. "Depend upon it," said Shaw, "if Macbeth had killed Macduff, he would have gone back to the witches next day for advice on how to deal with Malcolm."

The madnesses of Calais and Orleans demonstrate plainly that reason has no place in the human heart, and precious little in the human head; it is astonishing that, over the centuries, we have never shaken off the delusion. It was after all, the human race which thought up the notion "No smoke without fire" and until the human race ceases to believe it we shall continue to see episodes like those in Calais and Orleans. It is happily true that neither in the Calais frenzy or the Orleans *arc-en-ciel* was anyone hurt, let alone killed. But a very great number of people were killed in Auschwitz, their deaths having been ordered by a system based on the most thorough and logical premises, steeped in impeccable reason.

"Think it possible," said Cromwell, "you may be mistaken." Possible? Possible?

Clarke of the course

IT IS AMAZING what you find when you clean out the attic, as Stephen Dorrell, financial secretary to the treasury, knows only too well. Dorrell has just trawled the recesses of Whitehall in a search for prime targets for privatisation and has come up with some unlikely booty.

In the equivalent of the Renoir in the attic, he has discovered that the government owns three of Britain's best known racecourses, plus Aldershot airport on the outskirts of Belfast. No one is more astonished than Kenneth Clarke, now the proud owner of Epsom, home to the Derby, Sandown Park and Kempton Park.

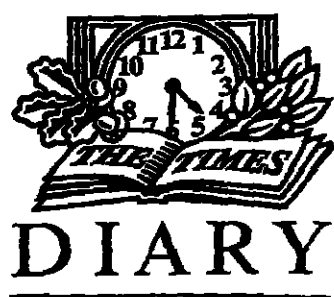
Dorrell's disclosure that the Home Office was in the racecourse business caught the department off guard. "I bet you were not as surprised as we were when we heard," said a spokesman. "Which ones do we own? Good question. I haven't a clue."

The government has owned the freeholds of the race tracks since the early 1960s. The Levy Board bought them to preserve racing on the sites after a public outcry greeted the sale of Hurst Park racecourse to housing developers in

1963. The courses are run by United Racecourses, a wily-owned subsidiary of the Levy Board, which is itself a Home Office creation. Any profits are ploughed back into racing. Tim Neligan, the managing director, was surprised that Clarke was in the dark. "I can remember Willie Whitelaw and Kenneth Baker visiting the courses. Perhaps I should have mentioned that they owned the place."

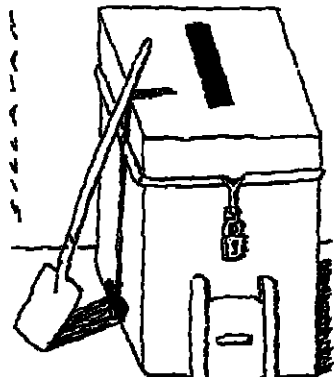
Dorrell's mission to identify potential areas for contracting out has already been dubbed "the long march through Whitehall". Tipped as a future chancellor, he is believed to be considering an auction of his new-found haul, a prospect which horrifies the racing world.

John Francome, seven times champion National Hunt jockey, was as astonished as the home secretary to hear that the government owned the racecourses. "I had no idea. I haven't seen many home secretaries at the races lately." But he is unconcerned about a possible change of ownership. "As long as it stays for racing I don't think the average punter will care whether the home secretary owns them or not."



For peat's sake

MORE dastardly tales from the Irish election. The director of elections for Fine Gael in North Tipperary has made an official protest to the Fianna Fail director of elec-



tions. He is alleging that a Thurles coal merchant spent election day promising free coal and peat briquettes in return for a vote for Fianna Fail candidate Michael O'Keefe. Rumours that those in North Tipperary with gas-fired central heating are protesting over the injustice are untrue.

ITN's recently published *The Royal Year 1992* shows just how horribilis the royal annus was. Endless glossy pictures show the Queen, the Princess of Wales and the Princess Royal in designer frocks suffering interminable polo matches, trips to the races, film premieres and opera performances. Not to mention those trying trips to Canada, Kuwait, Seville, Pakistan, India, Egypt and of course the ski slopes.

A leaping

THE House of Lords, portrayed as a toothless institution by the volatile columnist Paul Johnson in an article in *The Spectator*, is biting back. Peers are spitting tacks over Johnson's suggestion that Baroness Thatcher dispensed life peerages like confetti and that the job is a cushy number involving little work and less expense.

Johnson, who is calling for the abolition of the Lords, maintains



● Poor John Whittingdale (centre), torn between two leaders. The Tory MP for South Colchester and Maldon was formerly Baroness Thatcher's political secretary. Writing in *The House Magazine* he says optimistically: "I have never seen any contradiction in being a Majorite and a Thatcherite." Lady Thatcher may not agree. When Whittingdale abstained in the Maastricht vote she is said to have raged: "The trouble with you, John, is that your spine does not reach your brain."

that Lady Thatcher created "well over 600 life peers" and that the post is a "very different matter than in Pitt's day. Today it is a handsome uncontributory pension for life."

The piece, "Confessions of someone who has rediscovered his radicalism", has incensed Lord Orr-

Ewing. "For a start his figures are completely wrong. Margaret Thatcher created 187 life peers, not 600. In Harold Wilson's eight years as prime minister he created 225. I hope Paul Johnson's new-found radicalism is not founded on these dodgy figures."

The Lords, he says, "often get a

rough ride. You only get paid if you turn up and for some it's a long way to come."

● THE best wine waiter in the world is British. Well, ish. Gérard Basset, who won the Grand Prix Sapeva at the Grand Hotel, Paris, on Monday night, used to be French until he visited Britain nine years ago to watch Toulouse's football team in action on British turf. A chef at the time, he fell in love with England and stayed. He now works in a Hampshire hotel and has become a British citizen. The runner-up, France's Eric Beaumard, is said to be "guted".

Charter fight

DIFFICULT to imagine anyone owning up to having had the idea for the citizen's charter, let alone fighting over it, but a spat has broken out over who invented John Major's big idea. The Adam Smith Institute and the Institute for Economic Affairs have vied for the title in the past. Others insist the idea emanated from America. David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, authors of the book *Reinventing Government*, have been credited with the concept. But the idea is Major's, with a lot of help from Sarah Hogg, the head of the Downing Street policy unit. And that's official.



CITIZEN'S CANE

The public sector still has a lot to learn from the private

Even Mussolini was given grudging credit for draining the Pontine marshes and for making the trains run on time. Punctual public transport, like motherhood, wins instant popularity with voters. Most of the aims of the citizen's charter are equally desirable: who would argue with prompt medical treatment or Saturday evening driving tests? What is more questionable, though, is whether the charter will actually be able to achieve its ends.

Yesterday William Waldegrave, public service minister, reported on progress to date. The fact that politicians are even taking seriously the improvement of public services is in itself heartening. Under Baroness Thatcher the panacea for all public-sector ills was assumed to be privatisation. Many warned at the time that a private-sector monopoly would have no greater regard for its customers than a public-sector monopoly, even if it might make more money. They were proved right.

What John Major has recognised is that the incentives and deterrents of the marketplace need to be replicated for monopoly providers of services, whether they are state-owned or privatised. If customers cannot threaten to take their custom elsewhere, instead they have to be allocated rights which the service has a duty to meet. These rights may start with simple matters such as being treated courteously and quickly by a named official. They can escalate to the right to certain standards of service delivery.

But that is where the enforcement mechanism becomes difficult. Ensuring that officials are polite and wear name badges is virtually costless. Ensuring that a train runs on time is another matter. British Rail may now publish punctuality and reliability targets and its performance against these targets, but yesterday's report admits that some targets are still not being met. The government might attribute this to poor

management. BR would undoubtedly cite underinvestment. Arguments about improving service inevitably come down to arguments about money.

One way to ensure that management is as good as it can be (and therefore that any shortfall in service really is down to lack of cash) is to make individuals responsible for improving their part of the service. Performance-related pay, now in place for 500,000 civil servants, is a start, though to work it must account for a sizeable percentage of their pay packet. But incentives are not enough: deterrents are needed too.

As anyone who works in the private sector knows, the most effective deterrent to doing a poor job is fear of demotion or, at worst, the sack. That fear is rarely present in the minds of public officials. But if Mr Waldegrave really is to replicate the disciplines of the marketplace within the public sector, job security cannot be taken for granted.

At a corporate level, he is already introducing such a deterrent. The government plans to "market-test" nearly £1.5 billion worth of central government activity next year, that is, to put services out to tender. This will be the reverse of the citizen's charter: the government will be the customer of private-sector companies, who will risk losing their contracts if their services are not up to scratch. But tendering should not be seen as a substitute for greater discipline in public-sector management. It ought to save the taxpayer money, but it will not in itself improve services to the citizen.

These will only get better through constant and grinding application of political will from the top and its percolation down through layers of civil-service management. The occasional official must lose his or her job. Others must be suitably rewarded. The main discipline that has to be imported from the private sector is whatever is needed to keep public servants on their toes.

CLINTON'S FIRST TEST

Homosexuals should be allowed to serve their country

The narrow defeat of Senator Wyche Fowler in a run-off election in Georgia is an early and unexpected blow to President-elect Bill Clinton, who campaigned vigorously for his fellow Democrat. Republicans are already trumpeting this as proof that it was their candidate, not their message, that lost the presidential election. Mr Clinton invested much of his own political authority in Georgia's campaign. Already he is being accused, even before taking office, of backing away from his campaign promises, especially those to his liberal supporters.

No issue has brought this into more contentious focus than the case of Petty Officer Keith Meinhold. The 30-year-old naval sonar crew instructor was abruptly discharged after announcing on television that he was a homosexual. The navy offered no evidence that he had behaved improperly; the admission alone was sufficient grounds for throwing him out. Mr Meinhold went to court and was reinstated, with the judge accusing the Pentagon of "military dictatorship". The navy, aghast at the prospect of its long-standing taboo being broken, appealed. The argument has now been taken up by American society at large and has pitted Mr Clinton against influential politicians upon whose support he will depend, including General Colin Powell, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and Senator Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

No group gave more money and support to Mr Clinton's campaign than the rich and organised gay lobby. Stirred into action by the exclusionist policies of the Republican right, homosexuals across America worked hard to defeat George Bush; some 90 per

cent voted for Mr Clinton. Wisely refusing to be bound by any special interest group, especially one so likely to alienate middle America, he made few promises in return. He did, however, specifically commit himself to lifting the ban on homosexuals in the armed forces.

Mr Clinton must wish for some other first litmus test. No president wants to become involved in detailed policy before his inauguration; and Mr Clinton could do without a controversy that pits him against the hierarchy of the armed forces, whose commander he will shortly become.

To his credit, he has not retreated from his conviction that sexual orientation is not a ground for job exclusion. He has however recognised that special circumstances apply in the armed forces, and has suggested a commission look into any change.

This is not, as critics are claiming, "fuzzing" the issue. Strict rules on sexual behaviour already apply in relations between military men and women, especially on board ship. So they should. Equally strict rules must govern any expression of homosexual conduct lifting the ban on recruitment is not a licence for predatory behaviour.

That said, Mr Clinton must be firm in turning down the Navy's new attempt to get round the court ruling. It has now insisted on an enlistment "contract" which specifies that no recruit will be a homosexual — as if this were something that could be turned off, like smoking. Western society no longer sees homosexuality as a legitimate ground for discrimination. America and Britain are among the last western nations still believing the condition alone bars service in the forces. Both should think again.

ART IN ITS PROPER PLACE

Paintings should be seen in mufti as well as in gallery uniform

The fire at Windsor Castle came within a few minutes and yards of destroying one of the world's great collections. If the firefighters had not worked so fast last Friday, and if many of the rooms adjacent to the fire had not already been emptied for refurbishment, familiar masterpieces would have gone up in smoke, or been blackened beyond repair. Because of luck and the devotion of the rescuers, the only substantial painting that seems to have gone is a large and dispensable equestrian portrait of George III by Sir William Beechey.

But it was a close-run thing. And it raises questions about the care and display of art. Paintings of the quality of the Queen's collection would be safer in a gallery, with controlled atmosphere, modern wiring, sophisticated smoke-detection and fire-dousing equipment and constant attendants. They would also be better seen by more.

However, something of value would be lost if all great art were removed from the place for which it was painted, and concentrated into high-tech laboratories for paintings called galleries. The best place to see many paintings is their original or adopted home, whether it be a Florentine church so dimly lit that the prudent visitor takes a powerful torch as well as binoculars, or converted houses such as the Frick Museum on Fifth Avenue, or the Lázaro Galdiano Museum in Madrid, which preserve the taste of the original collector.

Context adds to art, and only professionals can for ever enjoy paintings displayed like

fish on a slab or stamps in an album. The concept of a public art gallery is quite recent. Cosimo de' Medici commissioned Vasari to build the Uffizi, but, as his name declares, he built it as offices, for the government judiciary. It was a century later that it was turned into the first and still the greatest gallery, for the Medici collections.

The gallery has become a part of civilised existence. And some of the latest designs and displays, as in the Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery, and, it is to be hoped, in the controversial extension to the Prado, display paintings better than ever before, with new vistas opening up around every corner. The latest gallery techniques of showing paintings in a domestic context offend the purists, so that upstairs at the National Gallery of Scotland has been described as a tart's boudoir.

But it would be a sadder world where one could not see the huge Van Dyck of the entire Pembroke clan at home at Wilton House, or imagine oneself back to proud Bess of Hardwick with her relations at Hardwick Hall. Kettle's Yard in Cambridge is an inspiring way of seeing modern British art because it is more private home than gallery.

Both are needed. The best modern galleries are safer, and allow more visitors to enjoy their treasures. But the state palaces and little houses must keep their paintings, if art is not to be institutionalised in a ghetto. They need to look to their fire precautions. Art is too important to be left to the curators.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Repairing the damaged castle — and who foots the bill?

From the Right Reverend Maurice Wood

Sir, Your awesome photograph of the Windsor Castle fire (November 21), like that of St Paul's Cathedral surrounded by flames in the London Blitz of 1941, will remain in the visual memory into the next century. Great tragedies call for major actions.

I well remember the Queen attending a thanksgiving service in Norwich Cathedral in April 1975, after the interior roof timbers were restored. Sir Edmund Bacon, the Lord Lieutenant, had invited the landowners of Norfolk and Suffolk to give us an oak, and the Queen had immediately responded herself from her Sandringham estate.

It would be a generous and imaginative gesture if one of the counties associated with the Queen's homes started by giving some timber for the Windsor Castle restoration, and other counties would surely follow in this fourth year of the Queen's reign. In ten years it would be an occasion of great national pride to see the castle gloriously restored for the Queen's golden jubilee.

Meanwhile may this fire disaster lead us all to pray more earnestly at this troubled time for Her Majesty and every member of our royal family.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE WOOD,
(Bishop of Norwich 1971-1985),
St Mark's House, Englefield,
Nr Reading, Berkshire.
November 21.

From Mr R. J. Guy

Sir, If Windsor Castle belongs to the state but the Queen regards it as her home, should she not pay rent?

Yours faithfully,
R. J. GUY,
866 Washwood Heath Road,
Ward End, Birmingham 8.
November 24.

From Mr Tim Jackaman

Sir, The national heritage secretary's premature assurance that the taxpayer would foot the bill for the restoration of Windsor Castle (report, November 24) robbed the Queen of

the public relations opportunity of the decade by not allowing her to preserve a national treasure and pay for what will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging and impressive restoration projects of our times.

By charging the Prince of Wales with responsibility for the project, such an initiative would also have allowed Her Majesty to provide a role for the prince which combines many of his major concerns — art, architecture and the nation's heritage.

Yours etc.,
TIM JACKAMAN
(Managing Director,
Square Mile Communications Ltd.,
Glade House,
52-54 Carter Lane, EC4.

From Mr Roger Bush

Sir, For many years the management and maintenance of royal palaces has been a responsibility of the state, undertaken successfully through the Ministry of Public Building and Works, the Department of the Environment, and English Heritage.

The question is, therefore: "Does the Queen have the right to say 'I don't think I'll bother to have the roof put back on — it would cost too much'?" The answer is clearly "No", and indeed some costs may already have been incurred by the state through the employment of experts to assess the damage. And if the monarch has no choice in the matter, it follows that there can be no obligation on her to pay the bill.

If the fire had taken place at Balmoral or Sandringham, matters would have been different, for those homes are part of her estate. But over Windsor, Hampton Court or the Tower of London we cannot turn the clock back, and it is futile to argue about who pays.

Parliament took on the risk of repair bills when it took on the management of these palaces. No doubt it was felt that they were part of the fabric of the nation. If we can't afford such costly fabric let us not try to pretend that someone else should pay.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER BUSH,
54 Farley Road,
Selsdon, South Croydon, Surrey.

Fire precautions to protect nation's heritage buildings

From Mr A. C. Parnell, FRIBA

Sir, In March, after several years' work by specialists from member states, a preliminary draft recommendation on the protection of the architectural heritage against natural disasters (including fire) was submitted for approval to the Council of Ministers.

The draft contains much of relevance, including recommendations for procedures in case of disaster and for safe working practice by those undertaking alterations to buildings or their contents. Governments would also be encouraged to insure all such buildings at Windsor Castle, which they could do more economically than meeting restoration costs as at present.

Unfortunately the draft has yet to be adopted. The United Kingdom has raised fundamental objections to the proposals, based partly on the issue of interference with the rights of property ownership.

It is high time that the Department of National Heritage and English

Heritage recommended the adoption of these proposals.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN C. PARNELL
(UK committee representative,
President, Institution of Fire
Engineers, 1985-6),
12 Tonbridge Chambers,
Penbury Road,
Tonbridge, Kent.
November 24.

From Mr Simon Hoffman

Sir, Rather than debating the wrongs and rights of the state meeting the cost of repairs to Windsor Castle we should be looking at how the fire was allowed to happen in such a financially and historically valuable structure and at making sure such an event never occurs again in a building of such importance.

One wonders why, if (as reported) the damage may cost some six times the amount spent renovating Hampton Court after the fire there, a government enquiry has not been announced, as it was for Hampton

Court. Sir John Gärlick's report for the Department of the Environment, published in July 1986, ran to some 50 pages and called for major improvements in fire-detection measures.

Among the questions needing an answer are: was the fire alarm system working in the area where the fire started? Would sprinklers have helped to contain the blaze (the risk of water damage is far less than that of smoke or fire)? Were guidelines, published in April by the Loss Prevention Council, which represents insurers and fire prevention interests, for construction sites and areas undergoing refurbishment being followed?

Perhaps all such royal buildings with a residential function should come under the aegis of a fire-safety adviser whose duties would ensure the highest standards of protection and extinguishment.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON HOFFMAN
(Deputy Editor, *Fire* magazine,
Queensway House, 2 Queensway,
Redhill, Surrey.

London hospital beds

From Mr D. L. Crosby

Sir, The 1987 European and US "league table" listing ratios of hospital bed numbers to population and quoted by Dr Wright (letter, November 19) is solely of historical interest and has no relevance to London's future needs — or for that matter to any other UK region.

What is now more important is to plan for the future on a rational basis, which should be concerned not only with bed numbers, but also with levels of clinical need. Because of developments in day surgery, keyhole surgery and other therapeutic advances, the general need for acute hospital beds continues to diminish.

Many patients would probably be cared for more comfortably and economically in "hotels" built in the vicinity of acute hospitals, whereas those needing care and support because of long-term disabilities are best treated in neighbourhood hos-

pitals, rehabilitation units and day hospitals. At the same time it is quite clear that all those who are very ill and potentially recoverable should be treated in intensive care and high-dependency units where highly trained doctors, nurses and special equipment can be concentrated.

A common problem with our present hospitals is that they were constructed for needs that have changed. Actual bed numbers are far less important than the skills and services that can be provided and future hospital architects will need a more imaginative approach to take account of potential developments. Hitherto they have failed to do so, which explains why many of our present hospitals are more akin to building sites.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID CROSBY
(Consultant surgeon,
University Hospital of Wales,
Heath Park, Cardiff CF4 4XW.

Pounds out of pocket

From Mr Charles I. Yarwood

Sir, Mr Simon Grice who, because of falling exchange rates, has lost 16 per cent of his UK salary by transferring it to his Swiss bank while fulfilling a short contract at a European research establishment in Switzerland, wonders where his shortfall now resides (letter, November 24).

His money is perhaps being put to better use in the British economy by his *doppelgänger*: a Swiss gentleman who has a short contract at a European research establishment in the UK.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES I. YARWOOD
(Managing Director and Chairman,
Imperial Buildings (Horley) Ltd.,
Highcroft, Bonnets Lane,
Ifield, Crawley, West Sussex.

Christmas bonus

From Mr K. Brian Fry

Sir, It may be interesting to note that the relevant statute (The Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act) now uses no fewer than 1,239 words, and the usual plethora of figures, clauses and sub-clauses to give effect to the pitiful £10 Christmas bonus for pensioners.

The rate has not changed since 1972, while the price index has gone up by a factor of more than six.

Of the bonus it has been written: "It serves little obvious purpose other than of courting political popularity."

How many votes can now be bought for £10?

Yours faithfully,
K. B. FRY,
No 1 Airport House,
Blackpool Airport,
Blackpool, Lancashire.
November 17.

Flaw in formula for council tax

From Professor Richard R. Barnett

Sir, With the impending replacement of the poll tax by the property-based council tax, and the imminent announcement of transitional arrangements, the government is in danger of replicating one of the main deficiencies of the former rating system. This deficiency has nothing to do with the tax base per se but is a consequence of the way in which the government chooses to distribute its grants-in-aid to local authorities.

Central to the grant-distribution formula is the idea that local authorities should be able to find a common standard of services (as determined by the government's estimate of each local authority's standard spending assessment) by levying a common tax rate. This central premise is built on fiscal illusion.

What matters for households is not the tax rate that they face but the tax bill that they have to pay. And when the notional value of the tax base varies between localities, as it does in the case of property, equal tax rates do not translate into equal tax bills. As a consequence, and as is widely recognised, the council tax will burden unfairly residents of the southern part of the country.

If the council tax is to survive, which it must if meaningful local governance is to continue, this weakness of the grant-distribution mechanism must be removed. The appropriate rule for the allocation of grant-in-aid should be amended so that similar standards of service will result in similarly situated individuals, for example residents of three-bedroom detached houses paying roughly equivalent tax bills irrespective of where they live.

One way in which this could be achieved would be to modify actual property values by an index of regional house prices.

The required objective could be achieved by other means also, but unless the grant-distribution formula is amended the new tax system will be open to the legitimate criticism of unfairness.

Yours etc.,
RICHARD R. BARNETT,
University of Ulster,
Department of Public Administration
and Legal Studies,
Jordanstown, Co. Antrim.
November 23.

Submarine base choice

From Mr Gary Streeter, MP for Plymouth, Sutton (Conservative)

Sir, It is expected that the Cabinet on Thursday will decide where to place future contracts for the refitting and refuelling of Britain's nuclear submarines, including Trident. The choice lies between Rosyth in Fife and Devonport in Plymouth (Rear Admiral Middleton's letter, November 19). It is apparent that Devonport has won the case on technical and financial grounds, but determined lobbying from Scotland has led to suggestions that this issue may be decided not on the basis of strategic defence needs and cost effectiveness, but on political grounds.

Only last Thursday a Scottish Office minister said that he and his colleagues endorsed the arguments of the Rosyth lobby, and will ensure that the Secretary of State for Scotland raises these issues in the Cabinet meeting this week.

It is possible that the government may decide to maintain nuclear work at both Rosyth and Devonport. Such a compromise will not be in the interest of the taxpayer, nor does it appear to reflect the navy's desire.

Devonport dockyard has already lost 6,000 jobs over the last five years. Some 22,600 jobs in the South West depend on the dockyard, the largest industrial complex in the area. With the naval base it forms the most significant naval complex in Western Europe. Devonport should be the choice.

Yours sincerely,
GARY STREETER,
House of Commons.
November 24.

Artistic impressions

From Mrs N. Edmunds

Sir, As one who enjoys modern art I watched the Turner Prize award on television yesterday in a fog of incomprehension. It was said by one of the critics interviewed that the general public would not understand the works shortlisted. Surely there is nothing to understand about all this pretentious nonsense.

Yours etc.,
N. EDMUNDS,
9 Churchyard Cottages,
Alresford, Hampshire.
November 25.

From Mr Alastair Duncan

Sir, On looking at the photograph (November 25) of the winning entry for the Turner Prize I wondered whether the two pieces of steel tube had originally been made by Matrix Churchill and later abandoned.

Yours faithfully,
ALASTAIR DUNCAN,
73 Riverview Gardens, SW13.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

مكتبة الأمل



BUSINESS 21-27

Neil Clarke writes on the problems of British Coal

ARTS 29-31

John Malkovich in the new film Of Mice and Men



SPORT 36-40

Floodlit Tests inevitable says Cowdrey

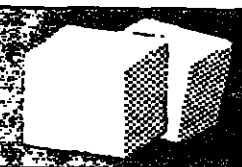
ACCOUNTANCY ON THURSDAY Page 28

THE TIMES 2

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 1992

BUSINESS TODAY

BITTER SWEET

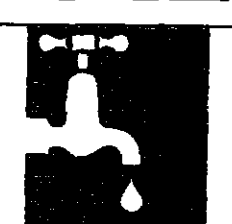


Tate & Lyle, the sugar group, hopes for recovery this year despite its first profits setback for 14 years Pages 22 and 24

LIGHTING UP

Growth in eastern Europe helped Rothmans International to slightly higher profits Times, page 24

WATERTIGHT



North West Water lifted profits and is targeting occupied homes that are not paying water bills Pages 22 and 24

US dollar 1.5277 (+0.0115)
German mark 2.4252 (-0.0048)
Exchange index 78.7 (same)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

FT 30 share 2033.1 (-7.0)
FT-SE 100 2709.6 (-17.5)
New York Dow Jones 3261.40 (+12.70)*
Tokyo Nikkei Avg. 17302.01 (+205.92)

London: Bank Base: 7%
3-month interbank: 7.75%
3-month eligible bills: 6.75-6.85%
US: Prime Rate: 8%
Federal Funds: 3%
3-month Treasury Bills: 3.24-3.25%
30-year bonds: 10.00-10.10%

London: New York
£ \$1.5240 £ \$1.5250
£ DM2.4277 £ DM1.5915
£ FF2.1771 £ SF1.4255
£ FF2.2180 £ FF2.3940
£ Yen198.84 £ Yen123.87
£ Index 78.7 £ Index 65.4
ECU £0.80865 SDR £0.910133
£ ECU1.236300 £ SDR1.08740

London Foreign market close
London Exchange
AM \$334.75 PM \$334.35
Close \$334.40 \$34.80
£219.00-220.00
New York
Comex \$333.95-354.35

Brent (Dec) \$19.20 (\$19.15)
WTI (Dec) \$19.20 (\$19.15)

RPI: 139.9 October (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Ratner quits the family firm

Chief executive pays price for attracting bad publicity

By MARTIN WALLER
DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

GERALD Ratner has resigned from the ailing retail jeweller that bears his name after months of pressure from shareholders who blamed him for the sharp downward spiral in the group's fortunes.

Mr Ratner is going as chief executive because of the welter of bad publicity since his widely reported remarks to the Institute of Directors in April 1991. "The continuing negative press I have attracted leads me to believe that this decision is in the interests of the group and the people working for it," he said.

James McAdam, who replaced Mr Ratner as chairman in January, will take over day-to-day running of the jewellery business in Britain, while the American operations will report directly to him through Nathan Light, the US chief executive.

Mr McAdam said the decision had been reached by Mr Ratner himself, and there had been no pressure from the board for him to leave.

"He's been 26 years with the group. It's the end of an era," he said. "The timing is his. Gerald has built it up from small beginnings to the size it is today."

"These things are always sad, when somebody goes after such a period and we have worked closely together."

A formal statement read: "The board would like to record its appreciation of Mr Ratner's immense contribution to the development of the group during his period of 26 years' service."

Mr Ratner admitted his unhappiness at leaving the group he had almost single-handedly created. "I am obviously saddened to be leaving a business of which I am so proud," he said.

Mr Ratner was on a three-year contract at £375,000 a year and will receive one year's payment in compensation for loss of office. He retains a holding of 800,000 shares, worth £144,000 at last night's

share price, down 1p at 18p ahead of the news of his departure.

Mr McAdam refused to comment on the all-important Christmas trading season already under way, saying the information was price-sensitive. Ratners' performance on the high street over the next few weeks, when most of the country's jewellery sales take place, will, some observers believe, decide the group's continued survival in the light of its huge debts.

But he did say the resignation was not related to trading. At the end of September, Mr Ratner faced a barrage of criticism from hostile shareholders at the company's annual meeting, with continued calls for his sacking. A man who, during his rise, was a master of self-publicity, he was uncharacteristically silent, and all questions from the floor of the meeting were fielded by Mr McAdam.

The chairman insisted at the time — despite vociferous claims that the fastest way out of the group's problems would be Mr Ratner's departure — that such a course of action



McAdam: "end of an era"

was "not on the table."

Shareholders, typically unforgiving of one of retail's best-known fallen heroes, claimed then that Mr Ratner was too much of a burden, despite his evident trading skills. One attacked the salary he earned last year, a sum of £574,000 that has since been reduced, as "obscene."

The group was also forced to announce, on the day of the annual meeting, a deepened half-way pre-tax loss of £30.6 million, down from £17.7 million.

Total debts at that stage stood at £266 million.

Mr Ratner is now thought to have bowed to the inevitable after further pressure both from shareholders and from his fellow directors concerned that the tide of bad publicity has still not ebbed as had then been hoped.

There was some surprise in the City at the abruptness of his departure, however. Julie Ramsay, retail analyst at Morgan Stanley, commented: "It obviously couldn't have been terribly comfortable for him, with so many things going wrong, to have new people coming in and dictating strategy."

"He's very much married to his business, and he seemed pretty committed to making the whole thing work. I don't see him as a guy who gives up that easily."

"There seems to be a degree of conviction that the bold strategy adopted will work eventually, albeit after a long and arduous haul."

He commanded tremendous respect from his staff despite the difficult times the group was trading through, she said, and his departure could therefore be damaging to morale.

"Love him or hate him, he's a trader. If the decision has been taken, the company feels that it can cope without him. Time will tell."



Sad farewell: Gerald Ratner, who is bowing out after 26 years with the group

Gerald's little gem was a joke too far

By JON ASHWORTH

IT ALL started with a light-hearted attempt to breathe life into a day of speeches and statistics. It ended last night, when Gerald Ratner, the former golden boy of high street retailing, stepped down from the company he built up.

In the eighties, Mr Ratner emerged as one of the most polished showmen in the retail business. But as the nineties loomed, signs of strain showed. There was talk that Ratners had grown too fast, especially after the acquisition of the Kay jewellery chain in America. His speech to the Institute of Directors in April last year was the last straw.

In his speech, now firmly embedded in City folklore, Mr Ratner wondered aloud why people were inclined to buy the company's cheap cut-glass sherry decanter set. It was, he said, because they were "total crap". In the days and weeks that followed, he backedpedalled furiously, insisting in vain that the remarks had been a light-hearted attempt to wake up his audience.

Ratners was started by his father, Leslie, in 1949, the year Gerald was born. He joined the family business in his teens and, unhappy with its performance, took matters into his own hands while his father was away on a trip. Soon after he became head of the business.

He once said: "There will be a time in this business when the qualities that I have won't be the right ones. I hope that someone does to me what I did to my father. I'd love it if my daughter did that."

As someone who admitted to being a compulsive worrier — "I stay awake at night worrying. There is always something", Mr Ratner can perhaps, now that the die is cast, sleep more easily.

Growth lifts hopes that US is out of recession

By COLIN NARBROUGH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

A STRONG spurt in American growth in the third quarter has raised hopes that the world's largest economy could finally be starting to lead the way to global improvement out of domestic recession.

Government figures showed that the initial 2.7 per cent third-quarter growth estimate had been revised up to an annualised rate of 3.9 per cent, making it the most robust quarter of the administration of outgoing President Bush. America last experienced growth of this magnitude in the final quarter of 1988, during the Reagan presidency.

Bill Clinton, the president-elect, welcomed the gross domestic product figures as "good news", but underlined that it would have no effect on his long-term strategy.

The GDP data caught Wall Street economists off-guard.

The size of the revisions prompted some analysts to question the quality of the figures, but most accepted that a surge in growth had taken place. Whether it would be sustained in the current quarter was, however, considered unlikely.

Other figures out yesterday helped enhance the brighter picture. The number of Americans applying for unemployment

benefits for the first time dropped by 12,000 in mid-November.

The third quarter pick-up puts full-year American growth on course for an annual rise of 2 per cent, or more. But more substantial growth in America is in sharp contrast with developments elsewhere.

Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, told the Bundesparliament for the first

time that the worldwide recession had now caught up with Germany.

The Japanese government also indicated that it might have to increase its package of fiscal measures to boost the flagging economy.

The dollar drifted lower before the Thanksgiving day holiday, while the tension that built in the European exchange-rate mechanism at the

start of the week eased, as dealers waited for the outcome of the election in the Irish Republic and the French national assembly vote on the Gatt deal.

The franc and the Danish krone recovered ground, with the help of a little intervention, in spite of persistent doubts about the durability of current ERM parities as long as the Bundesbank refuses to lower German rates. Partial German inflation figures yesterday showed inflation ticking up slightly, making it less likely that the Bundesbank council will today signal any easing.

The market is convinced that the Irish punt will be devalued this weekend by between 5 and 10 per cent. The currency remained just above its DM2.62 floor level for most of the day. A slight weakening of the mark provided a breathing space for the other ERM currencies.

Comment, page 25

Investor lobbies Bank over Barclays posts

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

A LEADING City investment institution has written to the Bank of England to complain about Barclays' decision to appoint Andrew Buxton as both chairman and chief executive.

The firm, which controls a substantial stake in the bank, has also met Mr Buxton to air its grievances and try to persuade him to alter his plans.

The Bank of England has not taken any action since it is thought to believe that Barclays' management team and its full complement of non-executive directors are strong enough to run the bank effectively. The firm's complaint, however, highlights growing unease among investors about Mr Buxton's appointment. Many believe he will be unable to fulfil both roles successfully. Analysts are forecasting that Barclays is heading for a loss of up to £100 million this

year, owing to record bad debt provisions and the bank is undergoing a reorganisation to cut costs.

Mr Buxton, who became chief executive in the summer and is due to become chairman in January, has visited a series of City institutions in an attempt to allay their fears. He has told them that he will keep his dual role under review and may appoint a chief executive if the job proves too difficult.

He has also told fund managers he will rely on the advice of his fellow directors, particularly Sir Peter Middleton, the deputy chairman and head of Barclays de Zoete Wedd. Fund managers are keeping up pressure on the bank to split the roles sooner rather than later. But Mr Buxton says he will take up the chairmanship as planned in January.

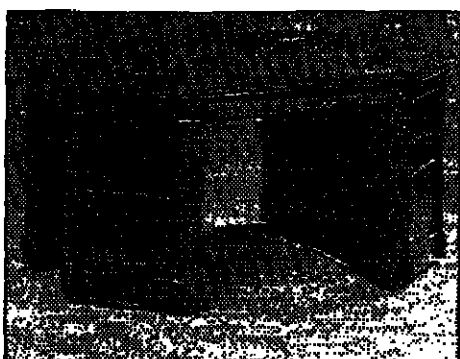
Balance of power, page 25

Perfect for a Little Corporal punishment.

This fine English library table of 1815 was destined for Napoleon's exile on St Helena, where his punishment, replete with beautiful furniture and the finest wines and comestibles, constituted most people's idea of a very sumptuous - if solitary - existence.

If you have any fine English furniture which you would like to include in our May sale, please contact us on the number opposite. Because you will find that fine examples are commanding very impressive sums, even in the current climate.

Or, should we say, Russian winter?



Octagonal library table made for Napoleon, c. 1815, George Bullock, London. Sold in November for £165,000.

CLOSING DATE FOR THIS SALE: 26TH FEBRUARY. If you have any pieces which you would like to include in our sale of English Furniture on 7th and 14th May, please contact Graham Child on (071) 408 5347 as soon as possible. Potential buyers may be interested to note that there will also be a sale of English Furniture on 19th February.

THE WORLD'S LEADING FINE ART AUCTION HOUSE
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مكتبة الأمير



Confident: Neil Shaw, chairman, is looking forward to growth in core markets

Tate & Lyle payout sweetens profit setback

By GEORGE SIVELL

TATE & Lyle, the sugar and sweeteners group, has suffered its first profit setback for 14 years, but the shares rebounded by 12p to 368p yesterday, reflecting board hopes for recovery in the current year.

Pre-tax profits for the year to end-September fell from a restated £230.8 million to £189.5 million. But as a sign of confidence in the future the total dividend for the year is raised 7.1 per cent to 12p a share out of earnings down from 33p to 26.2p.

Neil Shaw, the chairman, said: "In spite of the reduction in earnings last year we are confident of future growth in our core markets and our ability to extend our global reach in them."

Tate blamed £30 million of the profit shortfall on Staley, its American cereal sweeteners and starches business, which suffered from overcapacity compounded by a cold, wet summer in

the northern US. Tate said this was the third wettest and second coldest on record this century. Staley's payroll was cut by 25 per cent.

Staley has recently started making Stellar, which replaces fat in foods such as salad dressings, cakes, desserts and meat products. The market for fat replacements in America is, as yet, small and competitive. Tate claims 15 per cent of a £17 million market, but the market is said to have a potential of billions of dollars.

Tate & Lyle's other big problem area was Western Sugar, the American beet company. Tate says Western was responsible for £10 million of the profit shortfall and suffered from the "most difficult weather conditions in living memory for beet storage." Tate said that the deteriorated beets yielded less sugar and with prices very low, Western only scraped into profit.

Mr Shaw said that "in markets other than the United States good perfor-

mance was again achieved and a record level of investment in new plant and equipment spread across all our markets laid the groundwork for future progress."

During the year, Tate & Lyle's borrowings rose from 81 per cent to 89 per cent of shareholders' funds. The group traditionally believes in using debt to finance expansion because of the strong cash flows from its operations. Nevertheless it hopes to reduce borrowings this year. The year just ended saw a cash outflow of £89 million, an improvement on the £150 million outflow in the previous year. Operations generated £290 million, against £15 million last time.

Tate's reserves were hit by a revaluation of its Plastoware in East London to £4 million, against the 1989 valuation of £16 million. A further £54 million was also written off reserves to account for goodwill from acquisitions. This included £21 million to deal with

the Bundaberg Rum business. Exchange rates had a surprisingly small effect on Tate & Lyle. A translation loss of £2.3 million thrown up by the average exchange rate calculation was cancelled out by a rise in the value of dollar-based reserves by the balance sheet date.

Tate also wrote off £7 million on its new Sucralose low-calorie sweetener. It is still awaiting approval by the American Food and Drug Administration but is said to have met with an enthusiastic response from food and beverage manufacturers and consumers in Canada. Because of the delay in American approval, which is still expected at some point by Tate, production was temporarily suspended. Sucralose is used in 40 food products so far and is also sold direct to consumers as Splenda low-calorie sweetener.

Tempus, page 24

Ford Credit rebuked on finance scheme

By LINDSAY COOK
MONEY EDITOR

FORD is withdrawing literature about its Options finance scheme after the Office of Fair Trading found it to be in breach of the Consumer Credit (Advertisements) Regulations.

Ford Credit has given a voluntary undertaking to Sir Bryan Carsberg, director-general of fair trading, that it will amend advertising sales literature and sales training material about the scheme.

Options has been so successful that it has accounted for a third of sales to retail customers since it went national in June. Other manufacturers have launched similar deals.

The buyer puts down a deposit of 20 or 30 per cent and the dealer works out the minimum guaranteed residual value of the car at the end of the two- to four-year period.

The residual value is then deducted from the capital sum, and capital repayments are based on the amount left. However, interest is paid on the whole sum. At the end of the period, the buyer either pays the residual value, gets the dealer to sell the car or can just hand the vehicle back and pay no more.

The advertisements and brochures promoting the scheme compared it with a bank loan. Sir Bryan considered that was misleading. When a car purchase is financed by a personal loan the customer owns the car from the moment it leaves the showroom and can sell it. But under the Options scheme, the car remains the property of Ford until the final payment.

The literature sought to convey that the scheme was cheaper than a bank loan, but Sir Bryan did not think it made a true comparison.

Ford Credit said: "We only used the figures for bank loans as an easily understood alternative method of buying a car."

CBI to study grievances over funds for training

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

A threatened walkout of business leaders disenchanted with the training and enterprise councils has prompted the CBI to look into grievances over funding

BUSINESS leaders decided yesterday to carry out the first industry-based survey of the government's training and enterprise councils, the private sector-led bodies that administer training in Britain.

Some companies that sit on the 82 training and enterprise councils (Tecs) around the country are becoming disenchanted, especially over funding and financial flexibility. Some threatened to walk out if matters were not improved in the government's Autumn Statement. Despite the statement's measures, the Confederation of British Industry's governing council yesterday decided to study the Tecs' operations and investigate the funding grievances.

Sir Michael Angus, CBI president, accepted that there had been disquiet over Tec

funding. The council approved a questionnaire to ask Tecs how far they think they are achieving their objectives, and try to determine how accountable they are. It will suggest a different funding method, removing them from the ambit of the employment department, putting them under a separate funding agency, which would agree contracts with each Tec and measure their performance.

Though the CBI has informed the employment department of its intention, it said yesterday the enquiry would be independent.

In advance of the EC

summit in Edinburgh in two weeks, the CBI called yesterday for European interest rates to be eased. Howard Davies, CBI director-general, said a European growth package would be on the agenda for Edinburgh, and while the CBI had some reservations about sizeable budgetary increases for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, it would be beneficial if the summit convinced Germany about the seriousness of its economic position and its impact across Europe.

Leaders of industrial and employers' organisations from across Europe will meet in

London at the CBI next week, to put forward the issues they want their governments to discuss at Edinburgh.

Tomorrow, the CBI will publish its revised forecasts for the British economy in the light of the Autumn Statement, but the council yesterday restated the CBI's approval for the fiscal and monetary stances the government had taken.

The council approved the first draft of the CBI's economic priorities for 1993 — its submission for the first of next year's two budgets — which is likely to say there is no need for any tax increases, and especially in business. The council also urged EC ministers not to proceed with the European Commission's proposed energy/carbon tax, which the CBI said would weaken Europe's international competitiveness and endanger economic recovery.



Europe on the agenda: Howard Davies, CBI director general, believes Germany should be made aware of its impact

Evangelist may be sole runner for TVS

Resistance from shareholders stands in the path of American Pat Robertson's bid for the broadcaster, writes Martin Waller

THE second putative bidder for TVS Entertainment, the ITV contractor for the south, has pulled out after a look at the books, leaving the field clear for Pat Robertson's International Family Entertainment (IFE).

But an unholy row is brewing over the American TV evangelist's proposed takeover, which has the blessing of the TVS board and forebodes the creation of a satellite channel that could bring together such diverse attractions as *Low Grant*, *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, the Ruth Rendell detective mysteries and *The Waltons*.

A group of preference

shareholders in TVS claim to have sufficient votes to block the deal on technical grounds, even though IFE can count on a certain 35 per cent and a probable 50 per cent acceptances for the bid.

TVS yesterday said that a third party approach received this month, which came after the board had thrown its weight behind Mr Robertson's £45.3 million offer, had come to nothing after "de-

tailed financial and other information" had been supplied to the possible bidder, a New York TV producer with the backing of an American financial institution. The board is again urging IFE acceptance, saying that other alternatives have been considered and would not offer the same value.

But preference holders are upset at the terms on offer, 43p in cash for each prefer-

ence and 23p each ordinary share or IFE equity worth on average 26 per cent more than the cash. They are aggrieved at the support given by Mary Tyler Moore, the actress, to IFE in respect of a block of shares that have yet to be issued.

Miss Tyler Moore and Mel Blumenthal, two of the original sellers of the MTM TV production company to TVS in 1985, are taking shares representing 8.9 per cent of the votes as a delayed portion of the original purchase price. Under the terms of the acquisition they are required to accept the IFE offer, Julian Treger, of Restructuring Ad-

visers, the consultant, who are advising some preference holders, says they will vote at a forthcoming extraordinary meeting on December 10 against a special resolution needed to allow the IFE offer to succeed. This is a limitation of 10 per cent on any one holding in TVS and requires a 75 per cent majority.

TVS's advisers, however, believe the preference holders are indulging in a spoiling tactic which would block any takeover of TVS. The purchase of MTM sparked the decline in the fortunes of TVS that reached its nadir when the company lost the franchise for the South last year.

James wins external seat at Lloyd's

By JON ASHWORTH

DAVID James has won an external seat on the council of Lloyd's in a round of elections that has confirmed David Rowland as the troubled insurance market's next chairman.

Mr James, the company doctor who recently lost his battle to turn round Dan-Air, clinched the post from a range of candidates including Alfred Doll-Steinberg, chairman of the Gooda Walker Action Group. The four working members of council are: Mr Rowland, chairman of Sedgwick, Robert Hiscox, managing director of Robert and Hiscox, Stephen Merrett, chairman of Merrett Group, and Richard Keeling, underwriter of syndicate 362.

Mr Rowland and Mr Hiscox have been elected to serve terms of three years. Mr Merrett and Mr Keeling have been elected to serve for two years. The formal election of the chairman and two deputy chairmen takes place on December 2. The appointments apply from January 1.

The fight for an external seat was a close-run affair. Mr James received 4,230 votes compared with 3,598 votes for Mr Doll-Steinberg. The Association of Lloyd's Members, the largest and most powerful body representing names, had been backing Mr James for the post. Neil Shaw, ALM chairman, welcomed the results.

The failure to win a place on the council will come as a blow to Mr Doll-Steinberg, who is bracing himself for a stormy time when the Gooda Walker Action Group holds its annual meeting on Monday.

Many of the 2,300 members are reported to be incensed by a proposed clause that would allow the committee of 12, including Mr Doll-Steinberg and Tom Benyon, to split 1.5 per cent of all monies recovered through litigation between them, less 10 per cent of costs.

IFE£300 million was raised in settlement, the committee would have £4 million to share between them. Mr Doll-Steinberg said the proposal would be put to the vote. "It will either be accepted or rejected, but there is no question of modifying the proposal," he said.

A spokesman for a group of names described the clause as "entirely unacceptable". The action group committee has said that the fight to recover names' losses could become a full-time occupation over a period of five years, justifying their calls for remuneration, but other sources say it could take only three months. Peter Utley, secretary of the Feltrim Association, said it was wrong for the committee to take any remuneration other than moderate expenses.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

North West Water targets non-payers

NORTH West Water is linking up with electricity distributors to identify homes that are occupied but where the householders are not paying their water bills. The company is using customer lists from Norweb and Manweb, the two distributors serving the north-west. The action has led to a sharp reduction in the number of homes registered as empty, and therefore not liable for water charges, in its area.

North West pushed pre-tax profits ahead by £7 million to £130.7 million in the six months to September 30. The interim dividend is raised by 9 per cent, from 6.54p to 7.13p. Bob Thian, the chief executive, said the company was confident of reaching agreement on favourable terms with the industry regulator by the end of the year over the size of next year's price rise. North West is claiming that additional costs to cut pollution mean that it should not be forced to limit next year's price increase. Tempus, page 24

Strike ballot at bank

WORKERS at TSB Group, who have seen more than 5,000 jobs go at the bank in the past three years, are to be balloted on taking selective strike action over the cuts. Another 600 jobs are due to go at the bank this month, according to Biffu, the banking union, which believes 600 more will be shed in the new year. The executive of the union has decided to ballot their 20,000 members at the bank, which is making redundancies under a branch reorganisation programme. Ballot papers will be issued next week and the result will be known by Christmas.

Harmony seeks peace

A REVIEW of business at Harmony Leisure and the appointment of two new directors has been announced in a last ditch attempt to pacify shareholders ahead of today's extraordinary meeting. Guinness Mahon, the merchant bank, will review current operations, future business plans and corporate strategy. A preliminary report will be made in six weeks with detailed recommendations to follow. The review comes after consultations between the restaurants group and major shareholders "to canvass opinion and gauge support for Harmony's future strategy".

GPT wins BT order

GPT, the telecommunications equipment supplier jointly owned by General Electric Company and Siemens of Germany, has secured a £579 million contract to supply System X digital exchanges to BT. The order will underpin 2,500 jobs at GPT's plant in Liverpool. However, the exchanges, which will be installed over the next three years, are expected to be the last needed by BT to complete modernisation plans. GPT is stepping up efforts to sell System X overseas and to develop new products.

Pegasus chief leaves

THE chief executive of Pegasus, the computer software supplier, has left because of a "difference in management style". The departure of Jonathan Hubbard-Ford comes as the group carries out a strategic review of its business in the wake of trading problems. Pegasus said it would have plunged into the red, but for a £1.25 million profit on the sale of a 25 per cent stake in one of its businesses. Earlier this month the company reported a slide in pre-tax profits for the year to July from £1.7 million to £655,000.

Hartstone ahead

HARTSTONE, the leather goods and hosiery company, increased pre-tax profits from £8.2 million to £10.5 million in the six months to end-September. Turnover was £162.1 million (£92.8 million) in the wake of the purchase of two continental hosiery companies in November. The £65 million rights issue to partly fund the acquisitions diluted earnings per share from 7.7p to 6.7p. Reorganisation and other costs of £2.5 million have been charged against operating profit. The interim dividend is 2.8p (1.875p).

ABI Leisure cuts payout

ABI LEISURE, the caravan manufacturer, has cut its dividend despite lifting pre-tax profits 11.3 per cent to £2.3 million in the year to end-August. Turnover rose to £56.2 million (£52.3 million) and earnings were 5.8p (5.7p). A final dividend of 2.19p (3.13p) a share makes a total for the year of 3.76p (4.7p). The decision to cut the dividend was taken "as a matter of prudence" because an expected recovery in the UK market had failed to materialise. The shares rose 6p to 60p.

Holographics cuts loss

APPLIED Holographics, which makes embossed holograms, mainly for credit cards, continues to cut the losses that have plagued it since it joined the Unlisted Securities Market in 1984. In the six months to September, on turnover of £2.4 million, down 3.6 per cent on the same period last year, the company had a pre-tax loss of £622,383, against a £681,394 loss last time. Trading in the first half was slow, the board said. Holographic sales were below expectations because some orders were delayed.

Mid Kent edges up

MID Kent Holdings, the water company, reported a slight rise in pre-tax profits from £4.2 million to £4.3 million for the six months to the end of September. Operating profit was 5.4 per cent up, but Mid Kent said capital expenditure reduced the amount of interest received from cash balances. For the full year, Mid Kent said it was unlikely there would be any profit growth. The half-year dividend is up 5.5 per cent to 4.75p out of earnings up from 19.1p to 19.3p a share. The shares fell 1p to 253p.



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JERSEY EUROPEAN

Power supply firms present scheme to save pit jobs

Regional electricity companies want to save 15,000 miners' jobs and half the pits threatened with closure by giving British Coal time to reduce its costs to world levels

By Ross Tieman, Industrial Correspondent

THREE regional electricity companies have blamed the government for the crisis in the coal industry, saying ministers failed to inject sufficient competition into power generation or give British Coal enough time to get costs down.

Half of the 31 pits threatened with closure could be saved, along with the jobs of 15,000 miners, under proposals outlined to the trade and industry select committee enquiry into the coal industry by Norweb, Southern Electric and Yorkshire Electricity.

The power suppliers also called for the break-up of Britain's two biggest generators, National Power and PowerGen, into at least five competing companies.

Duncan Ross, chairman of Southern Electric, said regional companies would like to buy more power generated by burning British-mined coal to meet their obligations to ensure a secure power supply. But they were reluctant to sign five-year contracts for large power volumes because their monopoly over the "franchise" market of small and medium-sized companies was being progressively removed.

He suggested the monopoly over the franchise market should be extended until 1998. According to Southern, that would deprive medium-sized customers of a 0.1p KW/h reduction in power prices. However, all customers will receive a price cut of 0.3p/KWh as a result of British Coal's offer to cut its

prices in new contracts to take effect next April.

"We consider that the volume of medium-term contracts with British Coal currently envisaged — some 30 million tonnes — is limited principally by the size of the regional companies' franchise market and not by the total market for coal," Southern said in its submissions.

If the franchise boundary were to remain at 1 megawatt, it said, "we estimate the market for medium term British Coal contracts could be increased to some 55 million tonnes in 1993-4 and to some 45 million tonnes thereafter".

A steady market of 45 million tonnes could require as many as 35 deep mines, and should provide British Coal with the breathing space needed to get its prices down to world market levels. The total market would remain at about 57 million tonnes and British Coal should be able to compete with increasing effectiveness against imports, which make up the balance of the market, as its costs fall.

The power companies were also critical of the creation of an electricity market in England and Wales where National Power and PowerGen, control more than 60 per cent of sales. Ken Harvey, chairman of Norweb, said that a split into a larger number of competitors would create competition and presumably reduce prices.

Letters, page 25

ML ready to stem its losses

By Derek Harris

LOSSES continued in the first half to September for ML Holdings, the aerospace, defence and electronics group. However, in the wake of a recent top management shake-up the company said tougher financial controls were now producing improvements, with a promise of a return to profitability next year.

Turnover at £40.2 million was marginally up on the comparable period last year but the pre-tax loss stood at nearly £1.5 million, against a £1.3 million loss. There is no interim dividend. Much of the latest loss arose from a £1.1 million settlement of a legal action concerning a hovercraft supply contract.

Substantial cost reductions had been achieved in the first weeks of the second half-year, said ML. It was confidently expected that this trend and some savings made in the first half would return the group to a "satisfactory" level of profitability next year. Self-off candidates had been identified for when prices are right.

Boeing cuts jobs and production

From Philip Robinson in New York

SHARP cuts in the aerospace industry have forced Boeing, the world's leading aircraft maker, to slow production of two of its best selling aircraft and cut 2,500 jobs.

Monthly production of the 757 will drop by more than 40 per cent from 8.5 to 5 and for the wide-bodied 767 by 20 per cent from 5 to 4. The aircraft maker has already cut back on the twin-engine 737 model.

The latest cuts bring total job losses at Boeing this year to 11,500, or 8 per cent of the total. Almost half the cuts have been in the military operations. Job losses would have been higher had Boeing not planned the production of the new, long-range 777 airliner next year.

New orders for Boeing's 757 so far this year have totalled 15 aircraft, down 70 per cent from last year and 93 per cent lower than the peak in 1989. Boeing has orders for only ten model 767 planes this year, 85 per cent lower than a year ago and 92 per cent below its 1989 record.

Campaign launched to boost exports

By Colin Narkbrough, Economics Correspondent

THE government has unveiled its master plan for export promotion which it hopes will help recapture Britain's diminished share of world trade and exceed the 1 per cent increase targeted by the CBI for the end of the century.

Richard Needham, the trade minister, launching the strategy in London yesterday, said that if forecasts for world growth were accurate, and Britain returned to the 7 per cent world share of capital goods exports it enjoyed in 1987, it would increase sales from nearly £10 billion in 1990 to £24 billion by 2000.

He said Britain had failed historically to match its competitors in the sophistication of its commercial and industrial infrastructure. "The haphazard development of chambers of commerce, trade associations and professional institutions, has led too often to tunnel vision, professional rivalry and inadequate networking," he said, adding that

regional, national and international exhibition facilities were also inadequate.

Fears about recession in Germany and other key export markets, plus the spate of competitive devaluations since September, have prompted concern that British export performance, despite the sharp devaluation of the pound, will continue to lag behind imports. The impressive growth rate for exports seen earlier in the recession has slowed, but exports have been maintained at a high level.

The strategy involves strong DTI support for the "Industry Year Celebration" planned in 1995, reinforcing the West Midlands campaign to revive the birthplace of the industrial revolution. It also foresees front-rank exporters being encouraged to play godfather to smaller exporting firms, increased "one-stop shop" facilities for exporters in the regions, and ensuring that adequate export credit guarantees are available.



"Discounting is here to stay": Graeme Seabrook, left, and Sir Timothy Harford, chairman

Kwik Save unveils reshaped board

By Jon Ashworth

MONTHS of uncertainty over the future management structure of Kwik Save, Britain's biggest discount chain, ended yesterday with confirmation that Graeme Seabrook is stepping down as chief executive to take up a position in Hong Kong.

He will be succeeded next June by Graeme Bowler, currently managing director of Franklins, a large Australian discount food retailer.

Mr Seabrook has been appointed managing director of Dairy Farm International, which owns Franklins and is Kwik Save's largest shareholder.

News of his departure caps a turbulent year in the boardroom. Simon Moffat resigned as group finance director in May, to join Hilldown Holdings. He was replaced by Derek Pretty, former finance director of Budgets.

Yesterday, the group announced pre-tax profits of £110.6 million (£101.7 million) for the 52 weeks to August 29. The results compare with the previous 53-week period. Turnover in-

creased to £2.5 billion (£1.9 billion). Earnings per share were 48.21p (44.26p). A final dividend of 11.3p (10.4p) a share makes a total for the year of 16p (14.7p).

The shares slipped from 752p to 740p but recovered to 748p. Kwik Save has decided to open on the two Sundays before Christmas, despite its opposition to Sunday shopping.

Mr Seabrook said: "Discounting is here to stay. Unlike the supermarkets, we sell at the lowest price we can afford rather than the highest price they can get away with."

Financing expansion out of debt rather than through rights issues has resulted in interest costs of £2.5 million. The company has borrowings of £6 million on a balance sheet of £300 million. Kwik Save has a strong presence in the Midlands, Wales and the North West but has no stores in Scotland or East Anglia and a limited presence in the South of England. Expansion is continuing and a new store is opening every week on average.

Marston brews up a 44% increase

By Our City Staff

MARSTON, Thompson & Evershed, the Burton-on-Trent brewer, has announced interim pre-tax profits of £10.7 million, up 44 per cent over the same period last year, despite a market that Michael Hurdle, chairman, described as "tough".

The interim dividend is 1.45p (1.34p). Turnover, at £63.2 million, was nearly 9 per cent up on last time.

However, Mr Hurdle said that the beer market was characterised by "reluctance on the part of customers and aggression on the part of competitors".

His comment comes amid suggestions in the trade that, as winter sales have fallen steeply in pubs, some brewers are overstocked and face having to shut down brewing for periods of a week or longer.

Mr Hurdle said, however: "These half-year results give me grounds for cautious optimism."

While sales in Marston's tied pubs were down marginally, external sales had more than compensated, he said.

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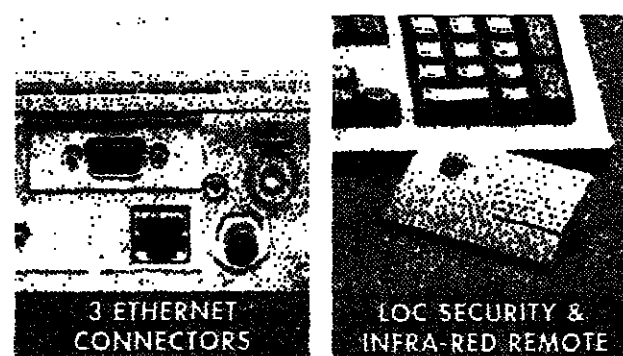
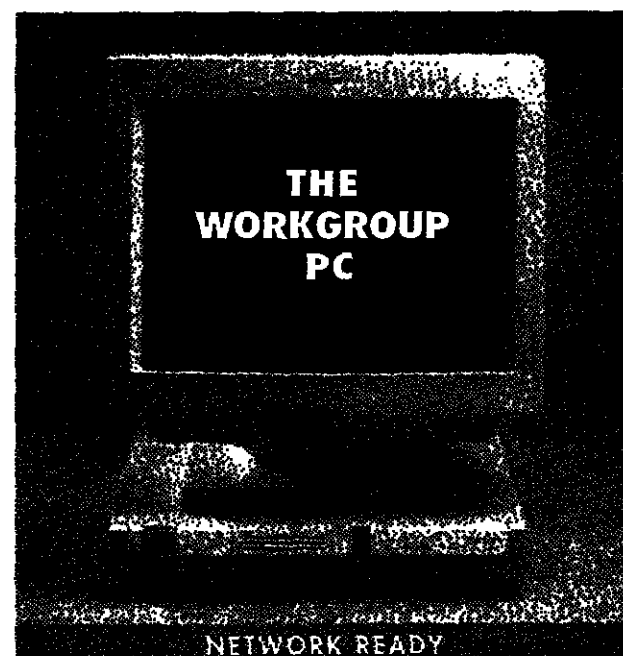
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TEMPUS

Confidence sweetens Tate & Lyle decline

TATE & LYLE has just suffered its first profits setback for 14 years, yet its management has raised the dividend and is full of confidence for the current year.

For an objective view, consider where the money was lost. The results for the year to end-September 1991 were restated downwards by almost £4 million to cover the cost of post-retirement healthcare provisions in America.

Then Tate & Lyle spent £16 million on re-organisation and redundancy, against £6 million last year, and knocked £7 million off the profit and loss account to cope with a write off on Suralose.

On the trading front, Western Sugar in America, which suffered from bad weather for beet storage, set Tate back £10 million, and Staley, the corn syrup producer, £30 million, compared to last year. Tate is blaming overcapacity, which was compounded by a cold, wet summer in the northern American, in fact the third wettest and second coldest on record this century.

Much of the bad news and the good news was already in the price, but prospects for Staley are the key to any valuation of the shares. If Staley stays low, then the City expects £230 million in the current year. If in the next few

months signs emerge to confirm the directors' hopes of improvement then £250 million could be on the cards.

The shares have recovered from less than 300p in the past four months to 368p, up 12p, yesterday. At this level, they stand on a multiple of 11.15 times expected earnings of £33p, assuming profits of £230 million. Assuming an 8 per cent rise in the dividend to 13p, the yield would be 4.7.

Hold on for good news from Staley before buying again.

North West Water

GIVEN the amount of antipodean lager that has slipped down British throats over the past couple of decades, it would seem high time that the Australians drank some water courtesy of Britain.

North West Water, of which Bob Thian is the chief executive, is to be congratulated on winning two contracts to build and run water treatment plants in Sydney and Melbourne, therefore.

The contracts are a fair boost to the burgeoning but still underperforming process engineering side at North West, although they are dwarfed by the potential of a pending project in Buenos Aires, almost an all-British affair where the company is in competition both with Thames and a consortium that contains An-



Terms of triumph: Bob Thian won contracts in Australia for North West Water

glian. North West's core business continues to show resilience in the face of the recession.

Falling volumes to large industrial consumers were more than balanced by an increasing take-up from smaller businesses.

The scale of cost savings being achieved left a 6 per cent increase in first-half pre-tax profits to £130.7 million, despite interest charges up from £2.4 million to £18.6

million. North West is raising the dividend by a better than expected 9 per cent.

North West is the only one of the ten big water companies to be challenging the regulator over next year's price rises, and this, along with the sudden departure last month of the finance director, has undeniably held back the shares.

They now yield 5.9 per cent, barely ahead of the sector average. The omens for

a settlement with Ofwat by January are good, and this should provide some short-term lift.

Rothmans

STERLING's weakness will benefit Rothmans International's export activities in the remaining months of its financial year ending March, and increasingly so in the following full year, at a time when core tobacco and luxury

goods interests are finding the going tough. Thanks to higher margins from tobacco, operating profits from leaf businesses rose from £180.1 million to £191.5 million, while operating profits from luxury products inched forward from £20.5 million to £21.8 million.

The group's famous cash mountain — net liquid funds of £897.5 million, equivalent to 140p a share, and up from £770.4 million at end-March — generated less net income, at £21.6 million (£33.1 million), because of lower interest rates, to leave group pre-tax profit for the period ended September a whisker ahead at £266.5 million.

Tobacco interests in various of its developed markets are not without their problems, though these setbacks are somewhat offset by the fresh opportunities coming Rothmans' way in China and eastern Europe.

The group justifies holding onto its handsome home cash balances of £469.8 million at home and £427.7 million belonging to partly owned subsidiaries by pleading the need to fund expansion and development.

Meanwhile, the interim dividend is being raised from 3.75p to 4p a share.

Year-end pre-tax profits should rise to £597 million (£565.2 million) to put the shares at 610p, up 12p, on 13.4 times prospective earnings, which is fair rating while the recession rolls on.

Japanese shares rise for fifth day in a row

Tokyo — Japanese stocks ended higher for the fifth consecutive day, a first for this year. Brokers said an official hint that more fiscal stimulation was possible next year helped prices, as did institutional position adjustment because of yesterday being the final trading day for November delivery.

The 225-share Nikkei average was up 205.92 points, or 1.20 per cent, to 17,302.01, with an estimated 200 million shares traded.

Hideki Nakajima, of Cosmo Securities, said: "Today's gain was mostly on special month-end factors as the fundamental picture is unchanged. In particular, some managers of public pension and insurance funds wanted to boost holdings by November's end."

□ Hong Kong — Shares ended lower in volatile but light

trading, as the market stumbled around for direction, players said. The Hang Seng index slipped 53.98 points to close at 5,918.54 after Tuesday's 78-point surge. It broke above the 6,000 level in the morning and then gave up most of Tuesday's gains in the afternoon.

□ Sydney — Profit-taking in afternoon trade pulled Australian share prices off their highs, leaving the leading index to close slightly stronger. After climbing to a high of 1,463.8, the All-Ordinaries index fell back to close 9.1 points higher at 1,459.2.

□ Singapore — Shares ended mixed with Malaysian speculative shares accounting for much of the busy turnover, brokers said. The Straits Times Industrial index closed only 0.45 point higher at 1,419.79.

Encouraging data send Dow 16 points higher

New York — American shares were higher in mid-morning trade, reflecting follow-through buying and a favourable response to the second consecutive day of encouraging economic data, analysts said. The Dow Jones industrial average climbed 16.48 points to 3,265.18 and advancing shares led declining shares by three to two.

Existing home sales in America rose 9.09 per cent in October. Jobless claims fell and third quarter real Gross Domestic Product was revised to a 3.9 per cent rise. Jim

Benning, a trader with BT Brokerage, said: "Everything was better than expected."

□ Frankfurt — German shares ended a quiet session slightly firmer as short-covering gave prices an early lift but selling from the futures market later eroded gains. The DAX index climbed 7.44 points to 1,517.72, nearly 10 points below a mid-session high. Traders said there was speculation from abroad that the Bundesbank would cut interest rates, but that was greeted with scepticism in Germany.

STOCK MARKET

Glaxo slips as rival wins approval to market drug

SHARES in Glaxo fell 20½p to 785p after SmithKline Beecham, one of its biggest rivals, won approval to market its anti-vomiting drug in Europe. Glaxo launched Zofran, used to prevent vomiting and nausea during cancer

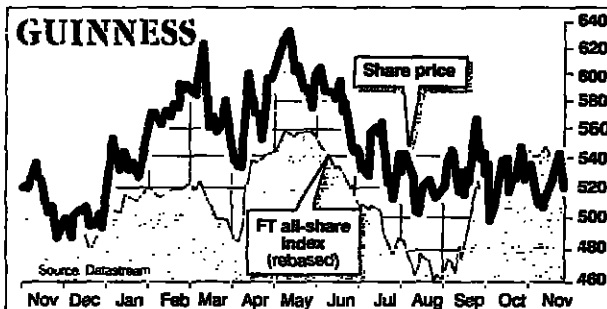
treatment, in March 1990, and last year was believed to have achieved sales worth about £259 million in America, Japan and at least eight European countries. SmithKline, up 2p at 538p,

expects the European Patent Office to issue a patent for Zofran, its anti-emetic drug, to be issued within the next six months. At present, Zofran is only available intravenously, while Zofran can also be taken in tablet form.

Last night, Glaxo said it would oppose the grant in the patent office and seek to invalidate the patent in any country in which SmithKline sought to enforce it.

Also in the pharmaceutical sector, Fisons closed 10p higher in after-hours trading as it emerged that the group had sold its US and Canadian consumer health businesses to Ciba-Geigy for \$140 million. The business earned \$5.5 million last year and had a book value of \$25 million.

The rest of the equity market was dragged lower by the financial future where Salomon Brothers, the US securities house, was reported to be a big seller. In thin trading, the



FT-SE 100 index closed near its low for the day, down 17.5 at 2,709.6, with investors worried by French threats to veto the agreement reached last week on Gatt world trade tariffs. Turnover was a modest 522 million shares.

Guinness fell 11p to 522p after County NatWest, stockbroker, urged clients to top-slice their holdings. But County believes that the shares will outperform on a long-term basis and says an under-performance of about 8 per

cent would provide investors with a renewed buying opportunity. Trading conditions are expected to be harsher in 1993 and this will be reflected in the group's rating.

TVS Entertainment, the independent television broadcaster, which is due to lose its franchise in January, fell 3p to 25½p after approving the bid from Pat Robertson, the American television evangelist. His company, International Family Entertainment, has offered \$70 million but

was threatened by a counter bid from a mystery bidder. TVS recommended the offer from IFB after the third party pulled out.

Rolls-Royce, the aerospacemaker, recovered an early fall to finish 4p better at 96p. The group has won contracts to supply industrial turbines worth £25 million. National Power, down 5½p at 275½p, is buying an £18 million generator for a Deeside power station and US Georgia Power is extending a combustion equipment deal.

Senior Engineering fell 2½p to 70½p after announcing plans to shed 90 jobs at its north London plant. The move is part of a restructuring programme following the decision to pull out of power generation and the supply of mining equipment. The mining business is for sale.

Pegasus, the USM computer consultancy, fell 42p to 86p after announcing that Jona-

than Hubbard-Ford, chief executive, had resigned because of a difference in management style. James Munn, managing director, said the main aim of the board was to steer the group back to profitability.

Laporte, the chemicals group, fell 22p to 593p after a visit this week by analysts to its new absorbent plant. It says trading remains difficult. Brokers have cut their profit forecasts by £5 million to £85 million. The shares recently benefited from switching out of ICL.

Tiphook, the container and trailer rental group, climbed 12p to 277p helped by the latest surge of American buying.

MICHAEL CLARK

BRITISH FUNDS

GOVERNMENT securities

continued to shadow the futures and European bond markets with prices losing ground in the afternoon.

The future led the cash market lower after bond prices on the Continent showed signs of running out of steam. The long gilt future finished the session 13 ticks lower at £100½½ as 22,000 contracts were completed.

In spite of another firm performance by the pound on the foreign exchange, investors appeared reluctant to commit themselves. The release, this week, of details of the £2.5 billion auction of Treasury 8 per cent 2003 continues to absorb what little interest investors can muster.

In longs, Treasury 9 per cent 2008 fell nine ticks to £100½½. At the shorter end, Exchequer 9½ per cent 1993 dropped 4½ to £109½½.

SHORTS (under 5 years)

High	Low	Stock	Price	Int	Grs
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

High	Low	Stock	Price	Int	Grs
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23

LONGS (over 15 years)

High	Low	Stock	Price	Int	Grs
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23

UNDATED

High	Low	Stock	Price	Int	Grs
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23

INDEX-LINKED

High	Low	Stock	Price	Int	Grs
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23
100	99	Treasury 9 1/2 1993	100 1/2	6.01	6.23

SURREY BUILDING SOCIETY

The following revised rates of interest will apply from 26th November 1992

	GRAND	GRAND	NET	NET
	OR MORE	OR MORE	OR MORE	OR MORE
SUPER PLUS ACCESS	8.32	8.15	6.20	6.11
£20,000 OR MORE	7.38	7.25	5.51	5.44
£10,000 OR MORE	6.35	6.25	4.74	4.69
£500 OR MORE	5.32	5.25	3.98	3.94
PLUS 3% BONUS ON 1ST YEAR'S SAVINGS	7.50			
MONTHLY INCOME	6.64	6.45	4.95	4.84
£5,000 OR MORE	5.27	5.15	3.93	3.86
INSTANT ACCESS	6.24	6.15	4.66	4.61
£5,000 OR MORE	5.32	5.25	3.98	3.94
£500 OR MORE	4.30	4.25	3.22	3.19
£1 OR MORE	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75
SPECIAL PLUS ACCESS	4.81	4.75	3.59	3.56
£500 OR MORE				
SUPER PLUS OVERSEAS & CHARITIES	6.04	5.95		
£500 OR MORE				

THESE SHARES ARE CLOSED ISSUES

Account	Price	GRAND	GRAND	NET	NET
		OR MORE	OR MORE	OR MORE	OR MORE
SURREY GROSS (Minimum balance £500 — £20,000 maximum)		5.01	4.95	3.74	3.71
PAID UP SHARES		1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75
7 DAY NOTICE SHARES (Minimum balance £500)		3.63	3.60	2.72	2.70
SUBSCRIPTION SHARES		—	2.75	—	2.06
SURREY GOLD (Minimum balance £20,000)		5.52	5.45	4.13	4.09

Interest rates are variable. Net equivalent assumes the current basic rate income tax of 25%. Interest will be payable net of basic rate income tax (which may be reclaimed by non-taxpayers or subject to the required registration, gross). The actual net amount receivable by an investor who has not registered for gross interest will depend upon the basic rate income tax balance at the time interest is credited or paid out. The Ordinary Share Account rate is payable on Annual Account balances below £1,000 and Monthly Account balances below £10,000.

For full details please ring Direct Savings Helpline on 0845 247 217

DIRECT Premium Account

NEW RATES OF INTEREST

effective from Friday, 27th November 1992

	Gross	Net
	£ p.a.	equivalent
Ordinary Account	1.00	0.75
Direct Premium Account		
Annual Interest	£1,000 — £9,999	7.35
	£10,000 — £24,999	8.05
	£25,000 —	8.20
Monthly Income	£10,000 — £24,999	7.70
	£25,000 —	7.85

Interest rates are variable. Net equivalent assumes the current basic rate income tax of 25%. Interest will be payable net of basic rate income tax (which may be reclaimed by non-taxpayers or subject to the required registration, gross). The actual net amount receivable by an investor who has not registered for gross interest will depend upon the basic rate income tax balance at the time interest is credited or paid out. The Ordinary Share Account rate is payable on Annual Account balances below £1,000 and Monthly Account balances below £10,000.

For full details please ring Direct Savings Helpline on 0845 247 217

BRADFORD & BINGLEY BUILDING SOCIETY

Granville, Runcorn, West Yorkshire BD16 2LA

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
J. Menzies	419p (+10p)
Q Holdings	240p (+15p)
Mitel	1070p (+16p)
Smith Group	340p (+14p)
Gest	275p (+12p)
Tate & Lyle	368p (+12p)
J. Smurfit	248p (+14p)
Rothmans 'B'	610p (+12p)
Tiphook	277p (+12p)
Antours	231p (+9p)

FALLS:	
Lloyds	492p (-15p)
Guinness	520p (-13p)

Resolving the power impasse

The European Commission is mounting a serious effort to cut national subsidies to coal producers between 1994 and 1997. It is setting an orientation price to which the more expensive producers should work towards or cease production, based on this year's weighted average production costs. The Commission appears to calculate these at about £88 per tonne. Under the proposed new contracts between British Coal and the electricity industry, British Coal will not be able to sell as much as it wants at about £38 a tonne. That sets the debate about British pit closures in perspective.

All the main interests in the electricity industry have been telling the trade and industry select committee that at least some, probably half, the threatened pits need not close on economic grounds. Their ideas on how this might be done are almost universally self-serving, locked in old arguments designed to preserve their market power and put the blame on others. The distributors say they could sign more contracts for coal-fired power if they retained their monopoly franchise market at its present size and want the privatised generating companies broken up. The big generators want the franchise market reserved for their coal-fired power, so that they can undercut newer higher price gas stations with their own gas plants in an increased competitive sector. Nuclear Electric claims that its old Magnox stations are cheap to run and expensive to close, though that clashes with arguments north of the border. The regulator has nothing to say.

If Michael Heseltine wants a solution rather than an alibi, he will need to knock some heads together and rethink privatisation of British Coal, which is a key element in the debate. Privatisation strategy was based on maximising profits and minimising risks. British Coal could supply about 10 to 15 million tonnes more than assumed at the new price without making losses on the extra tonnage, but profits on that business might be slim. It could displace most expected imports over the next couple of years by offering coal from its cheapest mines at a significantly lower price. That would, however, slash average profit margins, reduce free cash flow and make the business more risky for investors. This still looks the better option. Maintaining pits is the most sensible way to invest in future capacity, as reserves in other mines are quickly depleted.

Generators can be asked to co-operate on imports, and on maintaining stocks, if they are not to be regulated. Further ahead, when the bulk of new gas stations are due to come into operation, more drastic measures are needed. These are likely to include cancelling some gas contracts, phasing out the more costly Magnox stations and, provided that is done, reducing purchases of French nuclear power.

Western sunrise

America's economic upturn has come too late for President Bush but, if sustained, will be the best economic news for a long time. America may no longer be the locomotive for the world economy, but remains the most important single market. The surprising pace of third-quarter growth will also energise the debate about policy in Britain. As the National Institute emphasises, forecasting what will happen to Britain's economy next year is a game of chance, partly depending on the state of export markets. That uncertainty could easily tempt policymakers into piling on measures to stimulate recovery just to make sure, only to find the brakes have to be applied later. The combination of devaluation and interest rate cuts should provide a sufficiently powerful boost. The longer they take to work, however, the louder will grow the chorus demanding more.

Andrew Buxton shortly becomes chairman as well as chief executive. Neil Bennett does not expect the succession to be smooth

Barclays is a bank under siege. Already hemmed in by a busted flush of property companies that cannot repay their multi-million pound loans and by thousands of small business customers who feel they are getting a raw deal, the bank is being drawn into a third and even more damaging conflict with its own shareholders.

The City's most powerful investors are quietly but firmly telling the bank they do not believe it has the management strength to guide it through the difficult times ahead. The revolt began last April when Barclays announced that Andrew Buxton would succeed Sir John Quinton as chairman and chief executive in January.

The institutions have not only voiced their disquiet to Barclays. They have even written to the Bank of England to complain about the bank's decision to appoint a combined chairman and chief executive.

Mr Buxton has tried to defuse the confrontation by saying that if the task proves too much, the bank will appoint a separate chief executive. By making this concession, he has backed himself into a corner and may well relinquish the chief executive role early next year. But he is adamant he will take up the twin posts in January as planned. Barclays argues that it has always combined the jobs of chairman and chief executive and that Mr Buxton will be supported by a capable team of executives and a large cast of non-executive directors, so that there is no need to split the roles. Shareholders are unconvinced.

If ever Barclays needed strong management it is now. The City believes the bank is heading for its first ever loss this year and will be forced to cut its dividend because of unparalleled bad debt provisions. Barclays de Zoete Wedd, the bank's own securities house, suggests that Barclays is £1 billion underprovided against bad loans compared with its peers and forecasts that it will make a £65 million loss this year and reduce its total payout by a third.

A precursor of Barclays' largest and most favoured customers have hit the rocks in the past year, including Maxwell Communication Corporation, Moundleigh, and Olympia & York, developer of Canary Wharf. Elsewhere, the bank is involved in costly rescue operations. As well as managing a tattered loan book, Mr Buxton must take an axe to his bank's cost structure. Retail banking in Britain is undergoing an upheaval as the lenders rationalise their payment processing and customer service operations at the cost of tens of thousands of jobs. In the last fortnight, National Westminster and the Royal Bank of Scotland have announced projects to transform



Heir apparent: Sir John Quinton, left, is due to hand over the chairmanship of the bank to chief executive Andrew Buxton in January

their branch network and increase their selling power. Barclays must match them to hold its share of the retail banking market.

Mr Buxton must also stimulate loan and income growth as Britain emerges from recession and cope with any capital shortage caused by low profitability. He should ensure Barclays is well placed in the single European market and that BZW maintains its place in international capital and securities markets without incurring unnecessary risks.

In short, Mr Buxton faces a Herculean task, and institutional investors believe it is too much for one man, any man. "It's a huge job. Barclays' lending has been more imprudent than most, it has always underprovided and it has suffered a lot. Once a company starts to struggle it cannot afford to ignore the recommendations of the Cadbury Report," one leading shareholder said.

Mr Buxton will hold unparalleled responsibility. While Barclays has always combined the roles of chairman and chief executive, the chairman has always been able to rely on a second-in-command, originally titled senior general manager and later managing director.

Mr Buxton was managing director from 1988 until he became chief executive this year, and relieved Sir John of many of the daily pressures of running the bank. Now, however, the post has been scrapped. In its place the bank's operations are controlled by the chief executives of the two main divisions, Alastair Robinson from the retail bank and David Band at BZW. But there is no central figure

to direct group operations apart from Mr Buxton.

In addition to some institutions' opposition in principle to the appointment there is disquiet among many that Mr Buxton is not the man for the job, that he is too heavily involved in the mistakes of the past to be able to make a fresh start.

Whenever Mr Buxton's rapid rise to power at Barclays is discussed, his membership of one of the bank's founding families is sure to be mentioned, perhaps unfairly. The Buxtons owned one of the local banks that were merged in 1894 to form Barclays, and there have been family members in the bank ever since.

He joined the bank in 1963, aged 24, after graduating from Oxford. In 1970, after a spell in America, he was appointed a regional director of the Ipswich district. Five years later he became assistant general manager, and in 1979 was put in charge of the bank's corporate division. In the eighties the appointments began to flood in, including vice-chairman in 1985 and managing director in 1988, before becoming deputy chairman last year.

Despite his success, Mr Buxton can fail to win affection or admiration from staff or associates. "He's always very distant, not warm at all," said one former colleague who contrasted his coolness with Sir John's rapport with branch managers.

As managing director, Mr Buxton oversaw much of the breakneck growth in lending for which Barclays is paying so dearly now. Until 1987,

Barclays had been cautious in its lending policies, but then became worried that it was being left behind by NatWest, which had overtaken it in profits and balance sheet size.

The bank decided to expand its way back to the top. The result was a record-breaking £921 million rights issue, which was scheduled for October 1987, but was postponed after the stock market crash. It was shelved again the following February and finally launched in June.

After the cash call, Barclays started lending with a vengeance. Loans ballooned by £16 billion in that year alone, and reached a record £98 billion by the end of 1990.

With hindsight, the eight-month delay of the rights issue may have been critical to the damage the bank's loan book is suffering. By the time the funds were collected the economy was overheating and many of the lending proposals the bank accepted then are those it is paying for so dearly today.

In the first half of this year the bank made record bad debt provisions of £1.07 billion, effectively blowing the entire proceeds of the issue. "I hope none of us forget that rights issue and what it led to," said one institutional Barclays shareholder.

The big question is who, if anyone, Barclays will choose to share Mr Buxton's burden. Sir Peter Middleton, former permanent secretary at the Treasury and Barclays' deputy chairman, was an obvious choice as chairman and sources close to the bank say he was implicitly offered the chair when he joined last year. But now Mr Buxton has been offered the chairman's job he is unlikely to

relinquish it. In any case, Sir Peter's outspoken criticism of the bank's lack of strategy and decision making process have raised eyebrows in the City and fuelled stories of boardroom faction-fighting at the bank.

Barclays' search for a chief executive will not be easy. The bank lost many of its best managers to rivals during the mid-eighties, including Malcolm Williamson, now chief executive of Standard Chartered, Peter Ellwood, chief executive of TSB Group, and later Brian Pearce, chief executive at Midland.

One of these could be asked to return. They have demonstrated their abilities by tackling banks with complex problems, and an external appointment would satisfy the institutions who want to feel the bank can make a fresh start. Of the three, Mr Williamson is the most likely candidate since Mr Ellwood has only recently been promoted and Brian Pearce is 60 next year and may be looking forward to a quieter life.

Alternatively the bank could promote internally. Mr Robinson may well be the board's first choice while Humphrey Norrington, the vice-chairman, is a strong candidate.

Whoever accepts the job will need many skills and the capacity to work long hours to turn Barclays round. Most of all, he must have a common touch to inspire staff to pull together. Unless Barclays can solve its succession difficulties quickly, morale will continue to wilt among staff and shareholders and leave its mark on the profit figures and share price.

BUSINESS LETTERS

The case for closing pits and continuing the drive to cut costs

From the chairman of the British Coal Corporation
Sir, I am gratified that your newspaper is continuing to devote attention to the important reviews of the coal industry currently being undertaken. However, I feel I must comment on two points raised in your leader article of yesterday.

Over the course of 10 months of the most intense and painstaking negotiations with our main customers, we have not reached agreement on new supply contracts. However, as these negotiations progressed, it became all too clear to government and to British Coal that the maximum volume of coal for which the generating companies were prepared to contract next year was 40 million tonnes, declining still further in later years.

We stated clearly at the time of the closure announcement that it was this finite nature of the market which required us to proceed with the closure of some collieries which would have been profitable even at the prices we expected to be agreed in the new contracts. In spite of the price competitiveness of these pits, both now and in the future, our customers were not prepared to contract for any additional coal. The market dictated their closure.

I must also take exception with the implication of your article that British Coal management are not continuing to plan for and implement significant cost reductions at all collieries. Our cost reduction record is one of which all in British Coal are proud, with unit costs having been re-

duced by 36% in real terms since 1985/86. Equally, we are determined that the scope for future increased efficiency must be achieved. We are of course required to operate within the law, and where we think there is good reason for legislative review to obtain further improvement, we have pressed government to take the necessary action.

Even in the past few months, there have been some remarkable performance improvements at our collieries, better in many cases than Boyd anticipated in the short term in the report they compiled on 28 of our pits.

Many of Boyd's recommendations are based on a technical strategy already being pursued by British Coal, a strategy which we believe, and have stated clearly to govern-

ment, could result in performance improvements at our pits at least equal to those projected by Boyd. Whilst there may be differences of detail and emphasis, Boyd's general conclusions can quite justifiably be regarded as a vindication of British Coal management.

You are correct in saying that more room in the market needs to be created for coal for a larger industry to survive. I welcome the reviews and hope that their outcome will provide a larger market and allow British Coal to demonstrate what we can achieve at our collieries.

Yours faithfully,
J. NEIL CLARKE,
Chairman,
British Coal Corporation,
Hobart House,
Grosvenor Place, SW1.

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Yours faithfully,
J. NEIL CLARKE,
Chairman,
British Coal Corporation,
Hobart House,
Grosvenor Place, SW1.

The cost of running a foreign account

From Joan Salter
Sir, Like Mrs P. Van Rappard (November 20), I have a dollar income and have tried every way to minimise exchange charges. Unfortunately, if the Canadian banks charge the same as those in the US, then Mr Hutchings' suggestion (November 24) of opening an account over there, together with a Visa card, is not a cheap option. My US Visa card has a set annual fee of \$17.09. In addition, the bank imposes a monthly charge on my cheque account of \$7.25, if the balance drops below \$1,200. The final irony, these charges are not tax deductible, so I pay tax on income I never receive. It appears that banks on both sides of the Atlantic as well as the Inland Revenue think of us as fools.

Yours faithfully,
JOAN SALTER,
64 Church Crescent, N10.

Spirits flagging

From Joachim Sander
Sir, I have been looking forward to the correct printing of my country's national flag in The Times. I was taken by surprise when I saw the version of the German flag (November 17). This time, you avoided the mistake of inverted printing, but have the order of colours (black, yellow, red instead of black, red, gold) rather mixed up. This bears more resemblance to the flag of Uganda than Germany's. I am now looking forward to seeing the Belgian flag in due course as a renewed attempt of printing Germany's national flag correctly. Flaggingly yours,
JOACHIM SANDER,
29 Stonegate Court,
London Road, Leicester.

Letters to the Business and Finance section of The Times can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Whisky in store for Argyll

ARGYLL and Guinness were rivals yet again yesterday as runners-up in the Barclays Business Enterprise Awards, where it emerged that Argyll has still not quite got over losing Distillers to Guinness. Last year, it cheekily commissioned a 12-year malt and called it "Auld Acrimony" to celebrate winning £100 million damages from Guinness. Now, David Webster, deputy chairman, says Argyll has commissioned a 15-year old malt, destined for its Safeway chain, to mark the fifteenth anniversary of Argyll's founding. "You could say this second foray into the whisky market indicates we are still suffering some withdrawal symptoms at losing Distillers," quipped Webster, who set up Argyll with James Gulliver, a fellow Scotsman, and Sir Alastair Grant, the chairman, in 1977. The new malt will be called "Argyll" and bear the food group's newly created tartan. "It has to be said we do still regret losing Distillers," Webster admitted. "We would have got a lot of enjoyment out of it and would certainly have moved our headquarters to Scotland." Guinness, observers will recall, promised to do just that, but later backed off.

Winning ways

WHILE the Oscars make actors coy about claiming credit, the Barclays Business Enterprise Awards seem to have stressed the relationship between Dorian Nineberg and Simon Cooney, joint manag-



Whent winning Vodafone

ing directors of First Security, one of the finalists. Cooney was called to accept his award from Baroness Downton, but to general bemusement Nineberg jumped up, too, and insisted on escorting him to the podium. Wags in the hall were half expecting them to troop up to collect the best company award handcuffed together, as befits a security firm, but the spotlight eluded them. The prize for Company of the Year went to Gerry Whent's Vodafone. Whent accepted happily — all by himself.

Centre stage

CITY thespians take to the boards next week for their annual Christmas break from the woes of the Square Mile. Inspired by the success of their last production, *South Pacific*, the Stock Exchange Dramatic Society has turned to Tom Stoppard's *On the Razzle* for their latest offering — the 199th in the society's 87-year history. The Serious Fraud Of-

fice has taken an interest — in the form of Kevin Dunnett, a law clerk on temporary assignment to the SFO, who is set to make a stunning debut as a waiter. Others in the cast include William Harrison-Wallace, a market-maker with SG Warburg, Sue Foster, of Royal Bank of Scotland, and Bernard Doogan, of Hargreaves, Reiss & Quinn, a Lloyd's broker. The production runs at the Central Conference Centre, near the Barbican, from December 2 to 5.

Driving force

FINANCIERS often go to great lengths in the pursuit of new business, but Philip Kendall's performance will be hard to beat. Kendall, a corporate finance director at Samuel Montagu and budding car enthusiast, has taken part in a gruelling 2,000-mile vintage car race across Mexico from Guatemala to Texas. "We had up to 20,000 villagers coming out to wave us on," says Kendall, who was paired with Christopher Bibb, a former captain in the Coldstream Guards, in a Jaguar XK140, one of two cars sponsored by Montagu. "We await to see what corporate finance business will arise from this trip." Mistaps aside — the car collided with a culture and crashed into a barrier after a tyre blew up — the pair romped home in eleventh place in a field of 100, narrowly ahead of a GKN-sponsored entry and a car driven by Graham Walker, ex-deputy chairman of Argyll, which happens to be one of Montagu's clients.

DEBRA ISAAC

Due credit

From Mr Stephen Gratton
Sir, It would appear that a significant number of businesses fail because their customers do not pay their bills within agreed credit periods. Unfortunately, legislation to force prompt settlement of accounts appears some way off, so why not a tax regime that encourages prompt payment, albeit only once a year at the business year end?

In computing business profits for tax purposes why not disallow expenses which are not paid within an agreed credit period, to be approximated by some calculation of say an average credit allowed of 45 days. Everything owed after that would only be allowed in the following accounting year when paid. Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN GRATTON,
10 Hoker Road,
Heavitree, Exeter.

Reform of personal taxation and meeting Revenue demands

From Mr Alan Allsopp
Sir, In commenting on the 1986 green paper on reforms of personal taxation Anna Lines observes that the government "inexplicably" failed to implement the proposed reform (November 19). May I say that the Treasury explained to me quite clearly why they did not do so. They maintained that insufficient people had written supporting the proposals and that therefore they did not feel justified in implementing them.

I inferred from this "explanation" that folk didn't want their tax reduced, would bitterly resent it and would riot in the streets if tax reduction were wondrously visited upon them. However, leaving to one side the Treasury's irrefutable logic, may I point out how

much single people stand to lose under the government's failure to reform personal taxation once the council tax is introduced?

Many of them are women on very poor incomes indeed. The 1986 proposals would have made them £215 better off to face the new tax. Yours faithfully,
ALAN ALLSOPP,
A. H. Allsopp Guidelines,
78 Ewell Road,
Hall Green,
Birmingham,
West Midlands.

From Mr Michael Abbott
Sir, I never thought that I would write in support of taxation — but Mr A. G. Hebrons' letter (November 24) suggesting the cessation of preference for Crown taxation, makes me do so.

Taxes are levied on the basis of a high yield of payment and

if this does not happen, it sets off a spiral of increased taxation.

A small business can elect to pay value added tax on cash flow if it wishes, and many firms actually make a notional profit before the due date for payment.

Pay as you earn is a deduction from wages and salaries and when deducted it is the property of the Crown and should be paid on due date — the money should not be used for other purposes.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL ABBOTT,
56 Tophill Street,
Minster,
Kent.

ACCOUNTANCY

Graham Searjeant and Robert Bruce on the APB green paper

Warm welcome to reform

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT

THE welcome accorded to *The Future Development of Auditing*, this week's green paper from the Auditing Practices Board, is as remarkable, on the surface, as its contents. Rarely can such a heavily critical and revolutionary agenda for reform have been greeted with such instant enthusiasm by any profession.

Ian Plaistowe, president of the ICAEW, saw the paper as a powerful stimulus to debate among all parties. Brandon Gough, senior partner of Coopers & Lybrand, said: "We are very pleased with what they have come out with. This is what people want." John Magill, national accounting director at Touche Ross, said: "The outcome of the debate raised by this excellent paper will set the course of auditing for the next ten years."

There is some hard common sense behind this welcome, as well as natural relief that the APB has produced something so positive, and which could rebuild auditors' self-esteem. Audit reform could be the best thing that has happened to the business of big accountancy firms since information technology.

Audit partners have long been fed up with being the

unregarded providers of basic income to cover the overheads, but are locked into a cycle of price competition that has made the statutory audit of big companies' accounts more form than substance. So long as the finance director is the customer, this is what the customer wants.

Recession exposed that weakness by pricking the bubble in consultancy and corporate finance work. Expanding audit, in ways that add much more value to the service, could provide a stabler basis for the next phase of growth. Some audit bills could double.

Apart from expanding conventional audit to other public financial announcements, the APB's proposals embrace the Cadbury committee's call for auditors to vet compliance with a code of corporate governance and internal risk management controls. They anticipate calls for new items in financial reports and, at least in principle, greater responsibility to third parties, such as regulators, on anything from criminality to environmental performance.

The APB builds on earlier concessions obliging auditors to judge companies' financial viability, taking them into



Bill Morrison, chairman of the Auditing Practices Board, and Citibank's John McFarlane



murky areas such as vulnerability to risk and even the style of management. The protective veil of the Caparo judgment is cast gallantly aside. Demands of Austin Mitchell and his academic advisers are taken on board.

Not long ago, such thoughts would have horrified the average auditor. However, John

McFarlane, the layman who led the group that turned the APB positive, has carefully linked extra responsibility and accountability with legal reforms limiting auditors' open-ended legal liability. Without offering reform, auditors would have little chance of early legal relief.

While some of the new

responsibilities would be daunting, therefore, the downside is modest. The profession's leaders have enough confidence in Bill Morrison, the APB's canny chairman, to embrace the concept of compulsory rotation of audit firms, as well as partners, in return for multi-year audit contracts. This was dismissed as lunacy barely two years ago. The APB is trying to retain, within tighter limits, the commercially important freedom to offer other services to audit clients.

David Lindsell of Ernst & Young offers a useful antidote to euphoria. Such reforms could take many years to become reality, during which they could widen the expectations gap. The DTI is not keen to take a lead or legislate, as the Cadbury committee realised. The CBI will have both the cost and curbs on the power of the unitary board. Mr Morrison will need to mobilise a powerful lobby, including the institutes, to have any hope of turning ideas into reality.

China disaster

THIS report from China is no joke. In Maoshan village, in the eastern Anhui province, seven people were killed and 19 injured when an accountant accidentally ignited 1,188 cases of firecrackers at a fireworks factory.

THANKS to Sanjay Jawa, of Barclays de Zoete Wedd investment management, for this thought: Why did the auditor cross the road? Because he did it last year.

JON ASHWORTH

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ganyika, as it then was, and Botswana, before returning to London in 1970. He leaves a wife and a son.

Green audits

MORE than 10 per cent of all mutual funds in America are now subject to some form of ethical screening, and green issues continue to grow in importance in the UK. The intricacies of green audits are examined in a new book *Environmental Audit - The Background, Benefits and Fi-*

nancial Implications, written by Michael Renger, a partner of Nabarro Nathanson, the law firm, and published by Accountancy Books. "There has been a great deal of speculation about the impact of environmental law upon UK businesses," says Renger. "We felt very strongly that there was a real demand for a practical, hands-on guide that tells directors where, when and how to start." The book costs £25. More details are available on (0908) 668833.

What we all know but promptly forget

PROBABLY the most important paragraph in the revolutionary McFarlane report, *The Future Development of Auditing*, is number 4.2. It should be read by anyone involved in the increasingly tangled world of corporate governance, for it sets out what everyone knows but promptly forgets. It says: "There is a need to restate the basic principle reflected in company law: auditors are appointed by the shareholders, not the directors... auditors' responsibility is to the shareholder group."

For auditors, and indeed most of the business world, this is seen as a polite fiction. Finance directors really appoint auditors. The traditional reappointment at a sparsely attended annual meeting is a stage-managed farce that has nothing to do with supposedly fierce audit independence and truth in financial reporting. "And who will propose the auditors?", boomed a chairman at an AGM I went along to last week.

There was a lengthy silence, then an embarrassed shareholder popped up hesitantly. "Oh dear," he said. "I thought I was seconding it." That is the level to which the contract between auditors and shareholders has sunk. But the McFarlane report's reversion to the corporate world, which knows that change has to come, will be profound. For one thing, audit firms themselves are heavily criticised. The same paragraph 4.2 gets to the heart of more confusion, noting: "The colloquial use of the word client by auditors when referring to the company conveys the wrong relationship and adds to confusion as to the role of audit". This should throw auditor terminology into a lengthy period of re-examination.

On the evening after the report's publication, senior partners in one firm talked of political correctness finally reaching the world of audit. They had missed the point. Much of the trouble that auditors have had in recent years stems from such misunderstanding. By allowing directors to take advantage of the fiction that they, rather than shareholders, call the shots, auditors have lost the position of obdurate independence they need, in order to maintain their role. As a result, during a decade of corporate expansion and dubious accounting, they found themselves with no option other than full retreat. When accounting standards were first introduced there was a flurry of audit qualifications through the late 1970s. When it became obvious that no one

outside the profession was going to enforce them, companies simply ignored them. Auditors, as the head of the English ICA's auditing committee pointed out this week, had no option than to stop qualifying accounts. The results, as we now realise, were disastrous. A generation grew up which serviced rather than criticised the people they erroneously called clients. The real danger, as the report says, "is a question of the attitude of mind maintained by those involved in the audit."

That attitude of mind needs to be changed by a radically changed understanding of the principles. How many of those happily servicing their clients are, in the words of one of the report's list of enduring principles of auditing, "maintaining a stance of professional scepticism in their assessment of evidence"? In large audit firms there is certainly scepticism of clients' behaviour, but that has more to do with cynicism than a recognition that the firm could act to modify the behaviour.

The other side of all this change is to ensure that shareholders start to take the solid stance which would make it work. It is all very well to call for a triangular structure where directors are clearly responsible for what goes on within a company, auditors rigorously check that out and shareholders crack the whip, but huge changes are needed to make it work. Shareholders, particularly institutional ones, have been reluctant to use their muscle in public. Now is the time to change. The report has many useful proposals and, unlike the forthcoming Cadbury report on corporate governance, does not fight shy of legislation to bring about change.

The proposals also show that, with a heavy involvement of non-practitioners, a radical report which demands action can be produced. We have moved away from when the centre of the profession dismissed well-meaning reports which they knew no one would ever act upon. The downside is that its illogical structure becomes ever more obvious as a result. "The public becomes confused at the labyrinth of other bodies", said one non-practitioner on the working party. And it all lends credence to one of the other ideas of the report—to create "a single over-arching body for audit governance".

The author is Associate Editor of Accountancy Age.



ROBERT BRUCE

Andrew Sansom of ACCA dies

ANDREW Sansom, secretary of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants for many years, died last week while on his way to an opera performance in London. Mr Sansom, 55, joined ACCA in 1974 as administration secretary and was well known in accountancy circles. "It was a great shock," says David Bishop, ACCA president, who joins mourners at a memorial service tomorrow. Mr Sansom spent 11 years abroad with the colonial audit service in Tan-

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THEATRE page 30

Tony Haygarth makes a bluff, roly-poly Macbeth for the English Shakespeare Company

ARTS

LITERATURE page 31

Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, typifies a new breed of book-club writers



CINEMA: Geoff Brown welcomes a strongly acted new film version of John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*

Heroes who turn up in unlikely places

In California, two itinerant labourers struggle to get by during the Depression. One, Lennie, is a gentle man with a child's mind and a ferocious strength he finds hard to control; the other, George, acts as his parent and protector, sometimes grudgingly, mostly with pride. Working hard on a ranch, harassed by Curley, the boss's son, they dream of peaceful, better times running their own farm. Lennie will feed the rabbits; "Tell me about the rabbits," he asks repeatedly. But Fate has a darker future in store.

The world knows the story, of course. John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men* has been successfully dramatised, widely translated, and transformed into a 1939 Hollywood classic with Lon Chaney Jr., Burgess Meredith and a magnificent Copland score. But it bears retelling in sensitive hands, for Steinbeck's tale has the resonance of myth. *Of Mice and Men* recalls the need for friendship and dreams to combat hardship, and the danger of unprotected innocence.

The casting in Gary Sinise's impressive film may cause a gulp. John Malkovich is known on screen for his wily intelligence; yet here the seducer of *Dangerous Liaisons* stands with slightly crossed eyes, mouth agape, chunky with extra weight, struggling to grasp the simplest things. He first played Lennie in 1980 for Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company, which Sinise co-founded when only 18 years old. Compared to Chaney's exuberant portrayal in Lewis Milestone's film, Malkovich is far cannier: this Lennie knows about artful pauses and Method acting. Yet his technique never obtrudes upon the film's emotions.

Sinise himself, a theatrical talent now spreading his wings into cinema, takes good care of George, as he did on stage. He is a worried, hard-bitten face, ideal for a taciturn loner worn down by life but still clutching at hope. In direction, too, Sinise favours a few, spare gestures: the incident with Candy's old dog, shot off-screen, is particularly poignant, partly thanks to Ray Walston's affecting turn as Candy, the wizened ranch hand.

Most young moviegoers, however, expect something stronger or kinkier than a lumbering simple-

Of Mice and Men (Curzon West End, PG)
Blade Runner (MGM Shaftesbury Avenue, 15)
The Waterdance (Plaza, MGM Trocadero, 15)

ton dreaming of rabbits and the death of a four-legged friend. Sinise does at least offer the alluring Sherilyn Fenn (from *Twin Peaks*) in the enhanced role of Curley's frustrated, come-hither wife. Otherwise, Horton Foote's script springs few surprises: the story unfolds as it always has, though this time Milestone's soundstage interiors are largely replaced by dusty locations, wonderfully filmed in hot, golden colours by British cameraman Kenneth MacMillan. Given Stein-

'With a great story, caring cast and director, there is no need for fancy tricks'

beck's great story, a memorable cast and a caring director, there is no need for fancy tricks. This is a solid, moving achievement, and a film that will live.

Blade Runner has already earned its niche in history. For better or worse — to my mind the latter — Ridley Scott's 1982 epic set in motion fantasy cinema's current obsession with chokingly dense visual effects, scanty or bewildering plots, marauding mutants and all-pervasive black.

Ten years on, in this new "director's cut", the work of Scott's design team remains impressive. No science-fiction city since *Metropolis* has looked so awesome as this Los Angeles of 2019, with its encrusted pyramids of industrial might, towers belching acid fire, huge videoscapes and neon adverts looming through foul brown air and rain-swept streets. But we pay a high price for the film's design fetish. Despite the wicked grin of Rutger Hauer's rebel android, far more fetching than the weary hero in pursuit, this is a monotonous tale, its dramatic life choked by visual artifice.

When first released after nervous studio tinkering, two points grated

with critics and public. Harrison Ford's hard-boiled narration jarred; while the film collapsed in the home stretch with a contrived happy ending for Ford, the android hunter, and Sean Young, the sinuous android dressed in Forties' high style. The present version, based on Scott's original cut, removes both blights. The thriller plot now chugs along unimpeded, and the end is bleaker. Along the way some scenes get tightened, others, particularly those with Ford and Young, lengthened.

Blade Runner Mark Two is undoubtedly a better film, one no science-fiction devotee should miss. But it still seems a dangerous classic: arid, monumental, a doleful signpost to a decade of films drenched in black, smoke

and rain, of carwheeling mutants and cyberpunk gadgetry, a decade when high technology won and the human heart lost.

Yet hope springs eternal, for in *The Waterdance* the heart fights back. We are in a hospital's rehabilitation ward; our hero, a promising writer, lies flat on his back, slowly recovering from a broken neck, his head fixed in position by some medical variant of a crown of thorns. His fellow patients are all paraplegics: a burly redneck biker who spits out racist abuse, a fast-talking philanthropist, and, in a private room, a spinal and brain cancer victim who can only manage groans and shouts.

Many other hospital movies have tried to celebrate the human spirit, only to fall into schematic writing and emotional bullying. Neal Jimenez's first film, co-directed with Michael Steinberg, never completely avoids these pitfalls, but there is a lightness and candour here that

lifts *The Waterdance* well clear of strident films such as *The Men*.

The title is plucked from one of the script's few fancy patches. Wesley Snipes (the philanthropist, Raymond) dreams he is dancing on water; if he stops he drowns, so he must keep dancing. Luckily for us, Jimenez, best-known for his disturbing script for *River's Edge*, finds many better ways to observe the human spirit's tenacity.

And he had no need for research. In 1984 Jimenez suffered a hiking accident (like Eric Stoltz's hero), and is now confined to a wheelchair. If escapades such as the patients' jaunt in a purloined van seem far-fetched, the obsession with virility definitely strikes home. How can a paraplegic enjoy sexual intercourse? *The Waterdance*, courageously, faces the question.

Performances are crucial to the film's success. Stoltz, no stranger to medical problems after suffering a disfiguring disease in Bogdanovich's *Mask*, keeps self-pity at bay as the laconic Joel, whose good humour hides mounting despair, and who feels himself drifting from his married girlfriend (Helen Hunt). Snipes gives a showy turn as the glib ladies' man Raymond; though the most memorable patient is William Forsythe's Bloss, the mother's-boy biker forced to confront his own prejudices.

November's celluloid circus, the London Film Festival, has now left town, leaving behind memories of promising debuts, the crystalline new print of *The Leopard* and the inevitable duds that never lived up to the bookie's burbling. One excellent if melancholy programme sticks in the mind. The main feature was Ermanno Olmi's documentary poem *Down the River*, a beautifully photographed, muted cry of rage at the Po's pollution, matched to excerpts from *Messiah*.

The supporting short was an eight-minute wonder from the now half-paralysed Antonioni, a symbolic travelogue of Sicilian marvels, *Noto Mandorli Vulcano Stromboli Carnevale*.

Antonioni began in documentaries, his first, indeed, was about the Po. Poignantly, the wheel has come full circle.



Of Mice and Men: Lennie (John Malkovich) is a gentle man with a child's mind and a ferocious strength he finds hard to control; George (Gary Sinise) acts as his parent and protector

Losing a war but winning a battle

Philip Kemp reveals the bizarre history behind a classic film from the Thirties, which receives a rare screening next week

In July 1933, a young British screenwriter, Robert Stevenson, arrived at the Billancourt film studios near Paris, assigned to a prestigious new French production as "English dialogue director". The reason for this was that the film in question, *The Battle (La Bataille)*, was being shot in French and English at once — a common practice at the time. To reach more markets, producers would make films in multiple versions with a different set of actors for each language. Some movies were shot in seven simultaneous versions.

Stevenson later had a long directorial career that led from *King Solomon's Mines* through *Jane Eyre* (with Orson Welles) to *Mary Poppins*, but in 1933 he was still a writer, seconded from the Gaumont-British studios at Lime Grove. His assignment must have seemed straightforward. But the film's title, he soon discovered, was singularly apt. As the shoot foundered, he sent informal reports back to his boss at Gaumont, Michael Balcon, in letters that have recently come to light.

La Bataille was a rip-roaring exotic melodrama set in Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. A naval hero, Marquis Yorisaka, suspects his wife of intimacy with a visiting British naval officer. With expertise purloined from the Englishman, Yorisaka routs the enemy in a great sea battle. But his honour has been tainted by the suspected affair, and as victory celebrations erupt he commits harakiri.

The film's producer, Léon Garganoff, was an Armenian immigrant venturing into production with his newly-formed company, Lianofilm. "It's his ambition," Stevenson reported, "to make a great French film out of gratitude to France who accepted him to make a fortune out of film stock."

"He has got Nicolas Farkas, the most expensive cameraman in France; Bernard Zimmer, the most expensive scenario writer; and Charles Boyer and Annabella, two of the three most expensive French stars — and is rapidly losing all the fortune he made in Japan." Lianofilm had sent Farkas to Japan for authentic costumes and artefacts, enlisted the French navy for spectacular battle scenes off Toulon, and were building elaborate sets at Billancourt.



John Loder, "a stolid figure", and Merle Oberon at the outset of her career, in *The Battle*

The British cast included Merle Oberon, at the outset of her career, and John Loder, a stolid figure best remembered as the undercover cop in Hitchcock's *Sabotage*. "Merle Oberon has been sold to them by the astute Korda as a big English star," noted Stevenson dryly, "and they have engaged Loder for a difficult acting part under the impression that he is an actor."

Garganoff's unluckiest move was his choice of director. Victor Tourjansky had quite a reputation: director of acclaimed films in pre-Revolutionary Russia and later in France, First Assistant to Abel Gance on the monumental *Napoleon*. But he proved a disaster on *La Bataille*, insisting on an unspeakable script and alienating cast and

crew with his intransigent behaviour.

"The more I see of foreign film studios," Stevenson wrote to Balcon, "the more I wonder why I ever leave London. For the first three days we did no work as the cameraman had lost his camera. On the fourth the assistant director pushed the director into a pond. Tourjansky has already been sacked three times but blankly refuses to go."

Perhaps angling for a rapid return to London, Stevenson suggested Garganoff cut his losses and drop the English-language version. But the producer wanted an international hit — and that meant the American market.

At the end of August Tourjansky

finally quit. "Little Garganoff paid him off in full, and the moment he received his last franc, Tourjansky consented to walk out. At least, what happened was that he drove away in a high-powered car, shouting the most filthy curses on poor little Garganoff's head."

Direction was taken over by Farkas, who began re-shooting from scratch. Stevenson and Bernard Zimmer were sent off to devise a fresh script. "This we did in four days. Unfortunately, we only worked in French and had only one copy of the new script — which was lost in the fire which burnt down the studios the day we arrived back."

"It also consumed all the clothes, uniforms and three sets, and all the properties from Japan. The nega-

tive of the two days with Farkas, our only good days, hadn't been put in the vaults, and was ruined by the fire hoses."

While Stevenson and Zimmer rewrote the script once more, the production camped to the Joinville studios on the far side of Paris. Sets were rebuilt, local sources scoured for props and costumes, and shooting again re-started. With Farkas in charge things were smoother, but Tourjansky's malign influence still made itself felt.

Stevenson wrote: "Half the unit believe Tourjansky burnt down the studios himself. I am assured by everyone I meet that this is the most efficient unit in France, so I don't think what the others are like."

Shooting was further delayed when Merle Oberon, after a drenching with sea-spray, developed influenza. But against all the odds, hopelessly behind schedule, *La Bataille* was finally completed in mid-October — and turned out to be a fine film, a hit with public and reviewers alike. Boyer (who played in both French and English) was praised for his portrayal of a man trapped by a constricting moral code, and the battle scenes, unprecedented in their authenticity, aroused huge excitement. In America, where it was retitled *Thunder in the East*, reviews verged on the ecstatic.

Indeed for many of those concerned *La Bataille* was a lucky film. It clinched Boyer's reputation in Hollywood, and boosted Oberon's career: she soon became Korda's top female star (and his wife). Back at Gaumont, Stevenson got his first film as director. Farkas directed several more films before emigrating to America, where he developed photographic techniques for the US Navy. Even Tourjansky prospered, directing all over Europe before settling in Germany to make propaganda films for the Nazis.

Only poor Garganoff gained nothing from his film's success. He had dreamed of producing a prestige world-wide hit and, as in some fateful fairy tale, got his exact wish — at an awful price. *La Bataille* had gone wildly over-budget, and Lianofilm went bankrupt. Léon Garganoff, ruined, never produced another film, and vanished into obscurity.

● The Battle is showing at the National Film Theatre, London SE1 (071-928 3323) on Monday at 6.15pm.

Lustre and lucre to the other Arthurian legend

FOR all the music-lovers who believe Arturo Toscanini to have been the greatest conductor of the 20th century, here is the ultimate Christmas present. RCA Victor has released "The Complete Toscanini Edition", a monster collection of no fewer than 82 compact discs. The company claims it as the biggest "digital remastering" project ever, and it has been supervised by Jack Pfeiffer, who joined RCA in 1949 and worked with the fiery Italian maestro. The collection will sell for

The NAB, which supports five county theatre companies and a wide range of project companies, promises that all present drama clients will be supported until the end of March 1994, and perhaps as consolation, that it would support more work aimed at "young people".

Well Met

FRANKFURT, unlovely centre of the German business world, is preparing a cultural bonanza for 1994, the year in which it celebrates its 1,200th anniversary. Among the events announced so far, the highlight will probably be a visit by the Metropolitan Opera of New York, which will take over the lavishly reconstructed Alte Oper for a four-day programme of performances in May 1994. James Levine, the Met's artistic director, will conduct the season.

Last chance...

DRAMATICALLY and musically the densest, most complex of the Strauss/Hofmannsthal collaborations, *Die Frau ohne Schatten* is rarely staged successfully. Too often narrative is sacrificed to symbolism, and lushness obscures the score's essential delicacy. Covent Garden, however, in one of its best new productions for some time, has got things just about right: Bernard Haitink conducts with thoughtful authority, and there are vividly affecting performances. John Cox's staging is clear, efficient and assured. Only David Hockney's sets disappoint. Last performance is at the Royal Opera House (071-240 1066) tomorrow.

ARTS BRIEFING

around £650, and Pfeiffer — who was also the recording producer for Helmut, Horowitz, Rubinstein and Sokolowski — will be talking about it at the Britten Theatre, Royal College of Music next Thursday at 8pm.

● THE Northern Arts Board has commissioned and accepted a tentative policy a new report on the future of drama in the region which recommends that fewer companies be supported and a new method of funding introduced. The report, a bit like a Green Paper, decides that "funds are being spread too thinly". Under the new "franchise funding" a limited number of arts groups would receive support over a period of between two and five years, and awards would be made for special projects.

extended until 9 January

Three birds alighting on a field

wholeheartedly recommended

ROYAL COURT THEATRE



THEATRE: Martin Hoyle on a stripped-down, jazzed-up production of "the Scottish play"

Ambushed by his imagination

Macbeth
Royalty

Lady Macbeth (Lynn Farleigh, "efficient") and the Thane himself (Tony Haygarth, "bluff and practical")

OF THE production clichés from the Seventies that dog much of the English Shakespeare Company, there is mercifully little in the *Macbeth* that has stalked its bloody way to London WC2. Little but still enough. This is a *Macbeth* in kilts, complete with piper (Robert A. White) and a Duncan who resembles a cross between Edward VII and George V. Inevitably the fighting is done in modern battle dress, swords and firearms inconspicuously mixed; and an over-emphatic literalness is summed up by Lady Macbeth's bottle of Scotch to illustrate "That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold".

To begin with, the stage is stacked with furniture, props and costume rails, as in Cheek by Jowl's *Tempest* four years ago. The boys and girls, obviously deciding to do the show right here, self-consciously rearrange things. Lady Macbeth weeps over a doll baby, comforted by three women. Then bang — here we go again, to Bogdanov machine-gun sound effects and blinding batteries of light.

The witches are bag ladies busy stripping corpses. Their first scene is a purgatory of the streamlining that enables the production to run without an interval for two and a half hours. Vast curtains back simply deployed furniture. The most striking item is the crane which lowers Barquo's ghost onto the festive board over which Macbeth has intoned Burns' address to the haggis after that delicacy has been piped in, as at any set-price all-in Scottish tourist evening.

The production's most interesting

feature is Tony Haygarth. Stubby, even roly-poly, this Macbeth is not too bright but sheer doggedness, luck and a refusal — or inability — to acknowledge difficulties have, slightly to his favour, spun fortune's wheel in his favour.

Haygarth plays him as a bluff soldier ambushed by his own imagination, surprised by the sensitivity he cannot recognise and will not own up to. Initially a tubby figure that would probably be happier in a vest clutching a can of lager, he eventually attains a glimmering of the forces he has played with

and which have then played with him. Is this a dagger that I see before me? has the chirpy curiosity of a quartermaster taking an inventory. The requiem for Duncan — "Nothing can touch him now" — is a brisk resumé of the military situation. He shows the practical man's exasperation at half-understood obstacles that cabin, crib and confine him. And his annoyance at the ghost — "When the brains were out the man would die, and there an end" — is a yelping crescendo of uncomprehending fury.

The interpretation is consistent,

though it lacks the voice beautiful. This Gregory Floy's precious Macduff applies. Lynn Farleigh's efficient Lady Macbeth and Charles Simpson's Malcolm — living up the English scene which can plod — provide decent support, though John Woodvine's ad-libbing Porter falls slightly flat.

I noted the Stone of Destiny in Macbeth's throne, and both he and his enemies sport banners with the St Andrew's Cross. But Malcolm's English allies oddly brandish the Union Jack. Does perfidious Albion know something he doesn't?

JEREMY KINGSTON

Over-stuffed banana

happens the stardom, she must be thinking, is also only make believe.

A couple of blokes emerge from behind the drapes and pick off her shimmering costume. She shrinks in height, as anyone would if divested of a head-dress three-foot high, and we are back at the start of Memory Lane, no longer commanding the Folies Bergères (where I hope the seas are more welcoming than at the BAC) but more cowering in a small room in Philadelphia, aged 14, her immediate aim to land a job as a dancer.

The scenes in Maureen Chadwick's

"musical play" that chart her heroine's climb up the ladder race through a variety of places with the same energy.

Hope herself throws into her role. As a sassy young hopeful she grins, grimaces, seldom exits without jerking her shoulders back as if they could touch her hips, and finds out her limbs like a starfish on speed. Philadelphia, Broadway, Paris, and then an image of the choices ahead of her, nearly expressed as three impresarios offering various exotic hats. We even get to see her famous appearance wearing nothing but a girdle of bananas.

JEREMY KINGSTON

THE foot-tapping beat reaches a climax, the spotlight isolates the top of the stairs behind the audience, and there stands Josephine Baker, as personified by Dawn Hope, ostrich feathers teaming around her feet, more feathers cresting her merry head, and a snow-white sheath gown enclosing her from top to toe.

As she steps down to the stage, Warren Wells's three-piece band on the upper level, half-glimpsed through the white drapes, strikes up the intro to "Only Make Believe" and Hope begins to ooze into the mike, caressing it with her languorous vowels while an impish mischief glints in her eyes. On the last notes her self-possession falters, the voice dies away and a troubled stare replaces the gaze of a star performer dispensing charm: per-

DANCE: John Percival enjoys getting Stoned at Sadler's Wells with London Contemporary Dance Theatre

Mick, Keith, Charlie, Brian, Bill and Christopher Bruce

THE cheering began even before the dancers of London Contemporary Dance Theatre moved, as the sounds of the Rolling Stones came over the loudspeakers at Sadler's Wells on Tuesday to start Christopher Bruce's new ballet *Rooster*. And let me start with thankfulness for the care taken over the balance of the sound system; it is a change to hear recorded music in the theatre coming over loud and clear and not the least bit distorted.

Even with the competition for attention from Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall sitting in the front row of the circle, a few seats along from the Duke of York, Bruce's choreography held the audience throughout. Himself, formerly one of the biggest stars of British dance, he knows how to make his dancers look their best. As with his John Lennon ballet *Working Class Hero*, Bruce catches the heart of the eight songs, and adds his own dimension. He starts with the obvious cockerel strut of "Little Red Rooster" but neatly subverts the male cockiness

Obvious cockerel strut: Christopher Bruce's *Rooster*, for LCDT

of "Play With Fire" by having Kenneth Thray's hitherto placid partner put down his admonitory finger with one final dejected slap.

Bruce provides a darker side with Bernardt Iglitch's sad portrait of poor

crazy "Ruby Tuesday", and Darshan Singh Bhuller's tormented solo to "Paint It Black", but mostly this is a high-spirited work, something for the dancers and audiences to relish. A special word is due for Marian Bruce,

the choreographer's wife, who designed the colourful and evocative clothes: these are her first designs for the theatre, and she makes *Rooster* the evening's best-looking work.

Mark Morris's *Motocade* is easily the worst looking, thanks to the hideous effect on the dancers' figures of the shiny Lycra cyclists' costumes by Andrew Storer. Morris's choreography, occasionally stolid but often playful, deserves, and needs, better. It does benefit from its attractive score, Saint-Saëns's Septet.

The crisp energy of the dancers makes the most of limited material in Arnie Zane's *Freedom of Information*; but the advantage which *Rooster* has over the rest of this programme is that it offers content as well as form: a magic ingredient that could halt and reverse the recent trend towards falling audiences. And, following its success on Tuesday night, LCDT was quick to announce that *Rooster* will be added to the programme next Friday and Saturday, December 4 and 5.

LONDON

HAY FEVER: Maria Aiken and John Standing bowled the weekend guests in Coward's excellent comedy. Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-867 1119), opens tonight, 7pm then Mon-Sat, 8pm, mat, Thurs, Sat, 5pm.

BOW DOWN: Hanson Brethel's gaudy musical theatre piece, to a libretto by Tony Harrison based on an ancient ballad about two sisters in love with the same man, is presented in a new production by Graham Devine. The programme includes the first European staging of Parolus, a treatment of the story of Desdemona by the Australian-based composer Andrew Ford. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 8900), 7.45pm.

MECKLENBURGH OPERA: The company presents the Czech chamber opera *Perle* by the Czech composer Janáček, written in 1974, 30 years after the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. The opera tells the story of a young man and his girlfriend who, surrounded by spies and informers, give rise to an atmosphere of mistrust. The Place, Duke's Road, WC1 (071-387 0311), tonight, Sat, 8pm.

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TODAY'S EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Karl Knight

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THE KOSHI: This acrobatic dance troupe celebrates its tenth anniversary with a new version of its Endangered Species, a work co-directed, choreographed and inspired by the life of a young circus performer and vaudeville star. A variety double act struggling to maintain their professional and personal sanity. Trafalgar Theatre, 299 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (071-328 1000), even, 8pm, mat, Dec 5.

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THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale laments a certain lack of menace in an otherwise enjoyable production of *West Side Story*

There's a place for us (in Leicester)

Leicester's city motto must have been invented by a chronically depressed alderman on getting up one rainy morning and looking out of his window at all that red brick. It is, I believe, a numbing "semper eadem" or "always the same". Yet in one respect it is the friskiest town in the land. It has a theatre which stages lavish revivals of big musicals more frequently than any other, in or out of London: among others, *Chicago*, *The King and I*, *Cabaret*, *High Society*, *Me and My Girl* and *Oklahoma!*. At the Haymarket, "semper eadem" means always a good show around Christmas.

So it proves this year. It could be objected that an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* set in Hell's Kitchen is as Christmas as a prospect as the musical version of *Les Misérables* by Stephen Sondheim, will doubtless conduct for us before long. But *West Side Story* is not seasonal, it is certainly topical. "Immigrant scum", "spies", "wops", "get back where you came from", "they move in right under our noses and take it all away from us": it might be another friendly Friday night in downtown Rostock.

Actually, that unavoidable parallel creates problems for a director. The murders

in *West Side Story* are hot-headed and (except for the retributive killing of Tony, alias Romeo) almost accidental affairs. The general level of violence is more accurately conveyed by the Jet who enters with a slightly bleeding earlobe, the result of his having stunk-bombed a shop owned by the father of a Shark. The task facing Paul Kerryson, then, is to remain faithful to Arthur Laurents's text, yet acknowledge the sheer malignity of the feelings on show. These days anything less will seem a cop-out.

It is a task he performs somewhat fitfully. The opening is superb. Against a towering backdrop of grey tenements merging into the anonymous New York murk, a phalanx of boys appears, followed by another. They stand very still for a long time, then they begin to breathe more heavily, then breathing becomes whispering, which escalates into yells of rage, and suddenly racial slurs are viciously criss-crossing the stage. Again, Kerryson



The crew could be tougher and the production rougher: some of the cast of Paul Kerryson's staging would not survive on the streets of New York

does not stint on the scene in which Anita bravely crosses the cultural divide to bring the beleaguered Tony a message from his love, Maria. If Doc, alias Friar Lawrence, had delayed his entrance another minute, gang-rape would have been her fate.

Yet at other times both whites and Hispanics seem less menacing than they might. There are exceptions: Kieran Daniels's boorish, angry Action; Nick Ferranti, who plays Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks, with venomous grace. But I can imagine a tougher crew and a rougher production. I know that the period is the Fifties. I also know that, for all its creators' daring, this is still a Broadway show, not a piece of agitprop by Brecht or Bond. But there are boys on that Leicester stage who would not survive ten minutes in a primary school in today's Bronx.

In the event, the Sharks come across more powerfully than the Jets. They dance with more concentrated verve and their

Puerto Rican accents are at least as penetrable as the rather poor American ones of their foes. Thanks to weak delivery, or bad mixing, or a wrong balance between orchestra and singers, it is hard to follow the famous song in which the Jets ironically claim to be deprived because they are deprived. As for the principals — well, Caroline O'Connor's fierce, feisty Anita is more memorable than either Paulene Ivory's gentle Maria or Paul Manuel's wispy Tony. It is true that she has the livelier part, but they are surprisingly lacking in sexual electricity or emotional rapport.

Never mind. It is still an evening worth coming from Nottingham, Sheffield, Leeds or London to enjoy. Whatever the qualifications, how beautifully judged the young Sondheim's lyrics are, and what a marvel Leonard Bernstein's score remains. Imagine a musical nowadays with anything to match "I Want to Be in America". "Maria". "Somewhere (There's a Place for Us)", let alone all three plus four or five others scarcely less memorable. No, I can't either.

West Side Story is at the Haymarket Theatre, Leicester (0533 539797) until Jan 23

Readers upgrade to club class

LITERATURE: Book clubs are now offering their members the best in new fiction. Harry Eyres reports

Most literary folk, I suspect, would no sooner admit to being members of a book club than to taking their annual holiday at Buthins. My own image of book clubs was formed early on, by horrifying episodes of Esther Rantzen's consumer watchdog programme, *That's Life!*. Book clubs were shady organisations that lured unwary punters with a tempting offer of five classics in gold-tooled imitation leather for 50p, into an unbreakable commitment to buy jollyloads of off-the-table books on Armory: *Through the Ages* or the *Big Cats of Tanganyika*: the same punters, then unable to pay for the postage to return these unwanted tomes, were faced with hatchet-faced repossession men on the doorstep. Only at the eleventh hour were they saved by one of Esther's fearless young acolytes.

This picture is not entirely untrue. The average book club member, says John Roberts of Book Club Associates (BCA), the country's largest group of book clubs, is "probably not the sort of person who spends much time in bookshops". Middle-of-the-road fiction (Wilbur Smith, Jeffrey Archer) and non-fiction leaning towards gardens and kitchens are the mainstays. An important market is served by specialist book clubs (historical, military, sci-fi).

But how about a book club which offers the new Jeanette Winterson and the new Rose Tremain in soft covers only a couple of months after their hardback publication, and discounts off Gabriel García Márquez in Penguin? Or another in which you can belong without any commitment to buy a book?

A quiet, softback revolution has been occurring in the book club world over the last couple of years; here is a development which seems to offer publishers and authors access to a previously untapped market of serious book readers, who happen not to be bookshop-browsers.

The impetus behind these moves has come from America. Time-Warner has been running the Quality Paperback Bookclub for 17 years in the United States and membership now stands at around one million. Not so surprising, then, that Time-Warner should decide to set up a

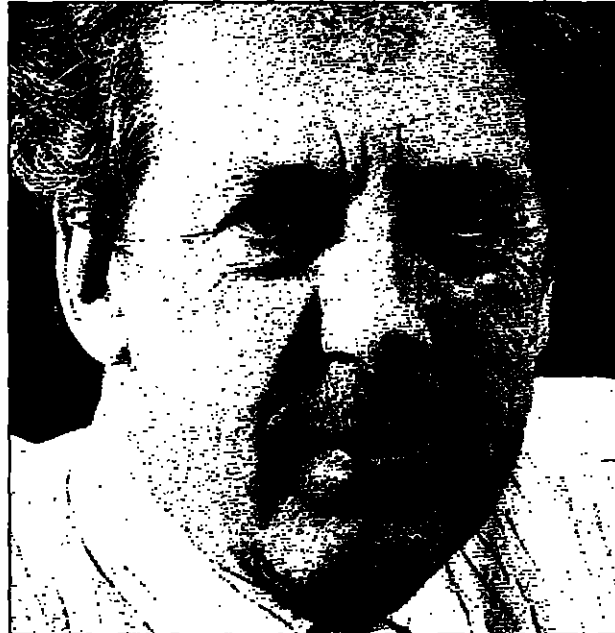
similar operation here. The choice of a different name, The Softback Preview or TSP, may have more to do with the fact that Book Club Associates got advance notice of Time-Warner's plans and tried to see them off by launching Quality Paperbacks Direct, in May 1990, four months before TSP got underway. Two years on, QPD shares an expanding market with TSP.

The Softback Preview is considered by most publishers to be the more enterprising and original of the two clubs. It certainly has a highly enthusiastic editor in Chris Hollifield, who produces a monthly *Preview* offering between 20 and 25 new books, spread between intelligent fiction and serious non-fiction. Most of these are soft-covered versions of hardbacks (good paper, larger print than paperbacks) brought out soon after the publisher's hardback at half the price.

The most revolutionary aspect of TSP, however, is that members are under no obligation to buy any books. Having taken up an initial offer of three books for £1 each, members can opt to buy nothing more, though they do have to sign and return a form cancelling the main selection every month for six months. This "no obligation" system required a controversial change in the Publishers' Association rules regarding book clubs.

Who are TSP's members? "I tend to say that they are people who normally would not be seen dead in a book club," says Hollifield. "They are serious, intelligent book readers, who are aware of the titles we offer, but have not got round to buying them." The titles in question presumably reflect Hollifield's own taste as well as her idea of the market: the two latest *Previews* feature Peter Ackroyd's *English Music* and Paul Theroux's *The Happy Isles of Oceania* as their main selection; within there is a range of science, biography and history.

QPD may be slightly more middlebrow in appeal, but the two clubs are aiming at roughly the same market. John Roberts characterises QPD's members as "young and intelligent": the latest bi-monthly QPD *Review* offers fiction by Alice Walker, Rose Tremain



A quiet revolution has occurred in the book club world: members are now offered the latest works by such writers as (clockwise from top left) Jeanette Winterson, Rose Tremain, Paul Theroux and Malcolm Bradbury

and Malcolm Bradbury as well as Robert Harris's *Fatherland* and Barry Norman's *100 Best Films*. The biggest difference from TSP may be a technical one: members must buy one book from each of QPD's six annual offers.

Neither Hollifield nor Roberts is prepared to release membership figures; both, however, declare themselves well pleased with their progress after two years: "We are certainly meeting our projected targets," says Hollifield. Adds Roberts, "we would probably be doing even better if it were not for the recession, but this is a successful, growing business."

The latest recruit to the quality paperback book club market has a reputation for

being one of the most innovative thinkers in publishing. Bill Buford of *Granta* has just launched the *Granta* Bookclub, primarily, he admits, as a way of selling *Granta*'s own books to the magazine's 60,000-80,000 subscribers. "We know exactly who our subscribers are: they are highly intelligent and they buy books. It just seems obvious to offer them the kind of books they want to buy anyway, at a reduced price."

The *Granta* Bookclub, like TSP, involves members in no obligation to buy any books at all; however, there is a fairly hefty catch, in that to join the *Granta* Bookclub you need to be a subscriber either to *Granta* itself or to the *New York Review of Books*. The

restricted range of books — all at present from *Granta*'s own list — may widen: if the club gets a favourable response from *Granta* subscribers.

Meanwhile, some elements of the retail book trade, notably John Hinchin of Phoenix Bookshops, president of the Booksellers' Association, strongly resent the change of rules by the Publishers Association which enabled clubs like TSP to operate a "no obligation" system. But, as Martin Goff of the Book Trust points out, "book clubs bring in new readers who are then more likely to buy books at bookshops." They also bring down unit costs on publishers' print runs, add to authors' royalties and make books cheaper for us.

BOOKMARK

Is that a fly in my glass?

A BOOK-SIGNING by Ralph Steadman can be more like an art class. The man who has previously written "autobiographies" of Freud, Leonardo and the Almighty likes to customise each copy with an elaborate doodle on the endpapers, and for his guide to the world's wines has taken to travelling with a pot of slow-drying pink paint.

At Ottakars bookshop in Tunbridge Wells, the queue of would-be buyers of *The Grapes of Ralph* (Ebury Press, £19.99) became foot-

sore and thirsty when in half-an-hour he finished only a handful of copies, which had to be carefully handed to prevent smudging. Finally the assistants got the message, gave in to the occasion, and opened a bottle of two of Chardonnay to hand round.

Afficionados of the Steadman splatter may like to know that the insect-shaped blob on page 119 is no decoration: just a fly that was inadvertently squashed on the film and reproduced in the whole print-run.

From scratch

THE LATEST addition to Walker Books' "Decorative Arts Library" is rather a coup. Despite its modest appearance, *Point Engraving on Glass* (£9.99) is a short scholarly history of the art by its leading exponent, Laurence Whistler.

He surveys the pointillist technique from a few Roman survivals through the work of 18th-century Dutch portraitists to the British revival he himself led. Two crucial moments were the first stippled highlight (a single cherry in 1646) and the realisation that the engraver draws not in black but in light.

Since the catalogues of Whistler's own engravings are all out of print and expensive when found secondhand, the illustrations of some of his best goblets, bowls and windows make a welcome introduction to the subject.

I think I'll call it America

BYAM SHAW College of Art once declined a lecture about Saul Steinberg on the ground that the man who drew the world as seen from Manhattan is "not an artist". Arthur C. Danto could not disagree more. His introduction to *The Discovery of America* (Aurum, £30) claims "there is nothing in the whole history of art" to put alongside this drawing.

berg's childlike yet sophisticated drawings, portraying America's brashness, egalitarianism, naivety and knowingsness. With cars, people, animals, writing and houses made out of interchangeable materials, Steinberg's America is, as Danto says, "an Art Deco continent". But lately in the urban jungle, destruction is winning. When Mickey Mouse becomes a terrorist, what has happened to the American dream?

JIM MCCUE

TELEVISION REVIEW: P.D. James is a more complex character than last night's BBC 2 profile suggested

The woman on the Tube resembles the headmistress of a rather decent girls' school and wears the expression of one who may be trying to remember the words of a hymn for morning assembly. More likely she is plotting murder, and murder in detail, at that: the blood spurts this

Conviction, but no evidence

way and splashes that way and trickles in this direction across dead but still warm flesh. Not just any Tube. P.D. James travels carefully in London, as if to avoid incur-

ring a plot development from one of her own books. She avoids Tube stations that have lifts in favour of those that have escalators. She walks on the lit side of streets. She has seen the statistics and they mean that crime is getting worse. This is a moot point, for in fact crime has become more reported without necessarily being more committed. Still, P.D. James is at heart pessimistic.

Bookmark (BBC 2) gave itself over last night to our foremost woman writer of crime stories. The introduction said that she had taken the genre "closer to high art than any other living practitioner". Possibly, though this bland profile offered no evidence either way. But from *Cover Her Face* 30 years ago, a classic story of English rural murder, to the new and very different *The Children of Men*, Phyllis James has produced a remarkably consistent body of work consistently

resourceful, consistently elegant, consistently violent. The programme did what these programmes often do, which is to interview a straight interview with monochrome film sketches of the work, overlaid with readings from the books. Ah, um, I suppose the technique achieves something for somebody; for me it achieves irritation.

As a governor of the BBC, I daresay James has views on such gymnastics. No doubt her own Green Paper would be a finer piece of literature than this Tuesday's from the government, which effectively told the governors to govern less. Some of the governors, surely? James is rather less interesting as an interviewee than she is on the printed page, but of course writers hold the best of themselves for their work. Here she was candid about an unhappy childhood, and she remembered, aged eight or

nine, being scolded by her mother. "You're so cynical!"

If cynicism in childhood is defined as a tendency to disbelieve adults, James was indeed cynical. And evidently remains so. She does not seem much enamoured of mankind, though she believes in the existence of God and His love. "On most other things I'm capable of doubt".

Capable also of homicide, but not murder. The former would be committed in defence of some family member, or against a putative rapist, whereas the latter has an element of pre-meditation which, for James, would rule it out.

These are fairly trite definitions, by which I mean ones to which most of us could give the nod. They were certainly given the nod in an unchallenging interview, which was either cut to accommodate the book extracts or simply not very incisive in the first place. Either way, there is more to P.D. James than was revealed last night.

PETER BARNARD

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ATLASES

Simon Jenkins

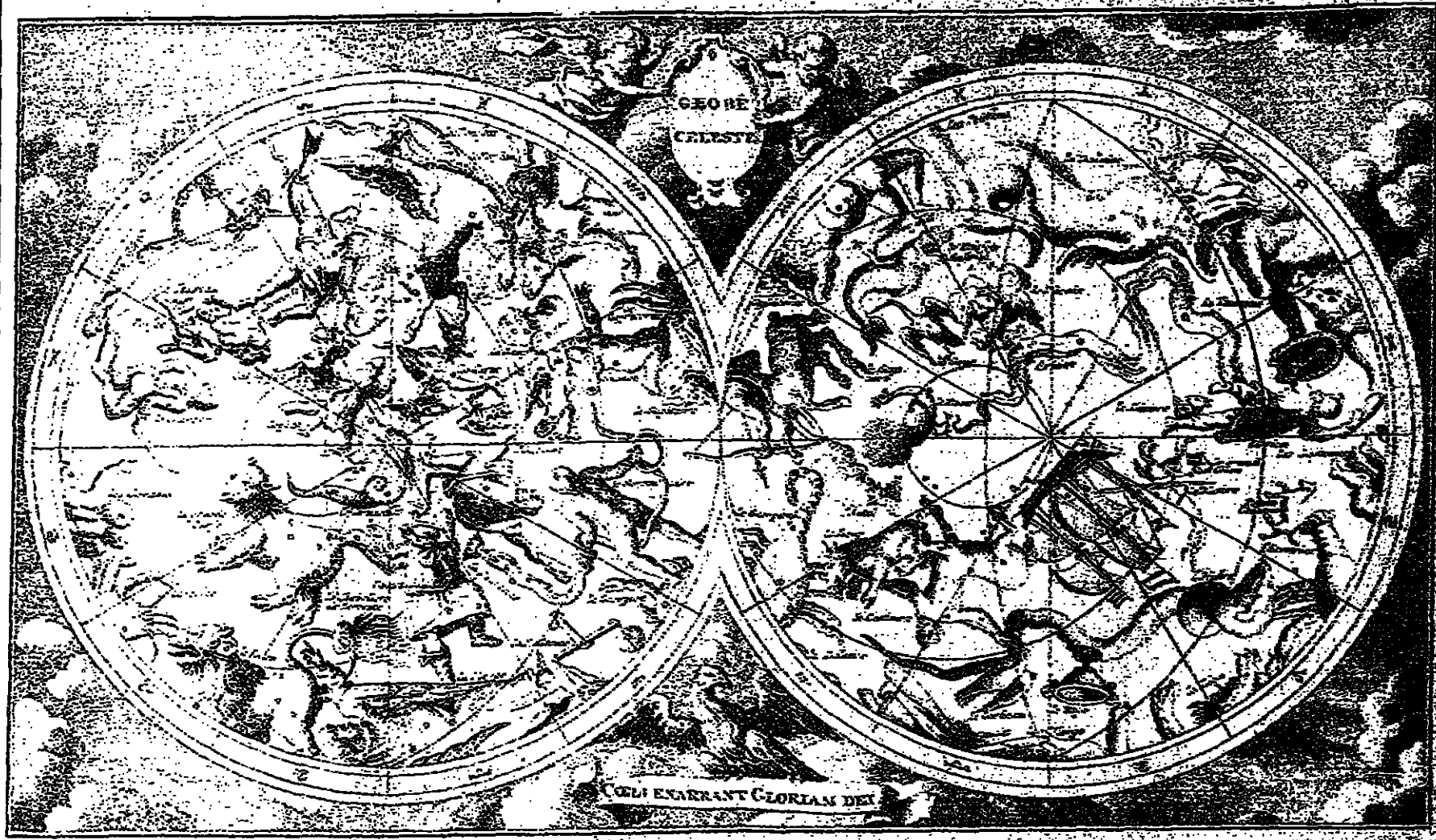
Still the giantkiller. Slightly narrower in format, but no less clear, no less thorough and awesomely fat, the ninth edition of *The Times Atlas of the World* (Times Books, £55) remains unsurpassed. Based on the Bartholomew map resource, the new edition is satellite assisted to make each dot accurate to within 1,000 metres. The gazetteer has grown to 210,000 place names. The edition even passes this year's updatedness test: it has Bosnia as a sovereign state (how long?) and the Arafat as a pathetic lake. But to show this is not a partisan review, I must gasp at the price of £55.

In his introduction to the Times atlas, H.A.G. Lewis points to the complexities that history sets in the way of the mapmaker. The location of a Middle East border or the spelling of a Chinese city is controversial, so much so that Times atlases are sometimes accused of being a cover for government policy. They are not. But maps have always been thus. Medieval geographers struggling to equate the Bible with the evidence of their eyes lived in fear of the Inquisition.

Columbus and the 1492 century have brought the Inquisition's bite note. Ptolemy, back into fashion, though I am glad to see that his precursor Eratosthenes gets due credit in Birmingham Central Library's magnificent *Atlas of Atlases: The Map Maker's Vision of the World* (by Philip Allen, Ebury Press, £25). Eratosthenes correctly calculated the size of the earth by measuring the sun's shadow up and down the Nile. Ptolemy halved it and thus led Columbus to believe he had reached China when he was only in Cuba. The Birmingham volume is based on the city's superb collection of historic atlases. It is an excellent introduction to the subject.

Christopher Saxton's *Statecraft Century Maps* (Wan Hill, £14.95) of English and Welsh counties is rather dull. Reproductions adorn every country house hotel. But the Chatsworth set is well-produced and to see a great house publishing its collection in this way is welcome. More original is Ashley Baynton-Williams's *Town and City Maps of the British Isles 1800-1855* (Studio Editions, £9.99). This was when small towns were becoming cities. Baynton-Williams and Studio have amassed a splendid collection from the Regency and Victorian cartographers, the A to Z of their day.

Atlases are now entering the gift business. *The Historical Atlas of the Jewish People: From the Time of the Patriarchs to the Present* (by Eli Barnavi (Hutchinson, £30) is a lavish product, covering not just maps but the social geography of Judaism. I must also commend Margaret Oliphant's *Atlas of the Ancient World: Charting the Great Civilizations of the Past* (Ebury Press, £19.95) as an ideal school introduction to ancient history.



An 18th-century celestial map with graphic representations of the constellations published by Covens and Mortier, from Birmingham library's Atlas of Atlases

Feline fantasies and feathered fancies

CATS

Anne Billson

Generally speaking, there are three types of cat book: informative, humorous and cute. If information is what you're after, look no further than Desmond Morris's *Catwatching* (Arrow, £4.99), which gives you the lowdown on everything from moggyish fads to catnip addiction. This is not a book for people who like pictures (there aren't any) but it's packed with arcane tidbits. Did you know, for example, that Persian warriors, aware that the enemy would never lift a finger against their sacred animal, carried live cats into battle against the ancient Egyptians? Imagine all that meowing at Pelusium.

For those who insist on illustrations, Grace McHattie's *Cat Tales* (Ebury Press, £9.99) tells us which American president had his cat stuffed and donated to the Smithsonian Institute. Even prettier pics can be found in Celia Haddon's *The Love of Cats* (Headline, £8.99), cat-related verse by the likes of Swinburne and D.H. Lawrence; and in *Parlour Cats: A Victorian Celebration* (by Cynthia Hart, John Grossman and Josephine Banks, Ebury Press, £9.99), which says that Edgar Allan Poe's cat sat on his shoulder while he wrote.

On the humorous front, Melissa Miller's *The Unadulterated Cat* (Signet, £3.99) proved to be a laugh and a half, since my cat Tiger, demonstrably a contender for stupidest feline of all time, emerged with a score which placed her in the Mastermind category. Traudi and Walter Reiner's *Astrolgy for Cats* (Gollancz, £4.99) is of no use to Tiger at all, since neither of us has a clue when she was born. Nor was she amused by Simon Bond's *Use of a Dead Cat in History* (Mandarin, £4.99), schoolboy humour based on the stiff moggy motif.

Of all the humorous cat books, Terry Pratchett's *The Unadulterated Cat* (Gollancz, £3.99) scored highest, simply because it was so obviously written by someone familiar with all those daft feline tics which cat-owners love to discuss. Cat-fanciers of a more traditional bent may prefer *The Cat's Pyjamas* (Methuen, £7.99), a small volume stuffed with Thelwell cartoons. Winner of this year's Cutest of the

Cute award is Leslie Anne Ivory's *Perfect Little Cats* (Pavilion, £6.99), a slim volume of finely whiskered pictures which comes packed in a slipcase with ten notes. D.J. Enright's *The Way of the Cat* (Sindbad-Silverdale, £9.99) is a heavily anthropomorphic tale, illustrated rather charmingly by Emma Chichester Clark. *Howe Life With Cats* (Grafton, £6.99) is a set of 34 poems by Brian Aldiss, with accompanying pictures in that naive style in which the cats look a bit like tea-cosies.

There are more tea-cosies in My Cat Jeffrey (Pelham Books, £5.99) by Christopher Smart, an 18th-century poet who eventually succumbed to religious mania and was confined to a madhouse, though we are not told whether Jeffrey went with him.

Weirdest of all is *Impressionist Cats* (Thames & Hudson, £10.95), which is like something out of a Surrealist's nightmare: famous portraits by Manet, Renoir, Van Gogh et al repainted by Susan Herbert to give the figures fluffy feline heads. Tiger is no stranger to culture — she once watched an entire Krzysztof Kieslowski film because it had pigeons in it — but on the whole she prefers Photorealism.

Barnaby Briggs

Saving the planet is a phrase that springs all too readily to the lips of newscasters and environmentalists, usually illustrated by flames engulfing rain forests. While the latter are in a terrible state, other natural habitats are threatened, too, and birds provide an obvious barometer of change.

Herbert Axel's autobiography, *Of Birds and Men* (Book Guild, £14.95), covers one man's contribution to bird conservation. Bert Axel has enriched the lives of thousands of birds, and birdwatchers, by designing and building "scrapes": shallow, shrimp-filled pools with hides around them. He has worked with birds from areas as diverse as Suffolk and Hong Kong, and his descriptions of birds' deaths — either by the barrels of Maltese hunters, or a pet owner shooting his duck on a lead — are harrowing. His work in adapting pliers to put small metal rings on birds' legs, vastly improved the process of ringing, a vital way of understanding bird migration.

Flying in the Face of Nature by Simon Barnes (Pelham Books, £14.99) describes a year in the life of Minsmere. Jeremy Sorensen, Axel's successor, explains the endless battle to maintain a reserve where birds want to breed, people want to see them, and both come back in increasing numbers year after year. Barnes describes the exertions of the wardens so clearly that you almost feel the blisters, and with such sympathy for the birds that you want to go and help.

John Gooders has written many books about birds, but none of them has photographs as stunning as those in the *Survival Book of Birds* (Boxtree/Anglia Survival, £19.99). Many of the pictures are the work of the scientists and film makers who have contributed to the *Survival* films, and all are of superb quality, composition and colour.

Unlike many colourful books, this has a text which is not just there to fill in the gaps. The world's birds are described by geographical areas, a method which illustrates their extraordinary diversity and some interesting similarities. Why, for example, did all the southern continents have huge walking birds like moas, ostriches and emus?

Laughs in the bath

Lois Rathbone

An Englishman spends, on average, nearly five days a year, or one year of his life, in the bath and although 13 per cent of us (5 per cent in Wales) read in the tub, we are often stumped for suitable drip-dry material. Into this gap springs Michael J. Cat with the admirable *Grown-Up's First Bath Book* (The Windrush Press, £7.99). Made of waterproof, floatable soft plastic, and complete with pen (for cryptic and quick-dip crosswords), it includes language tips for the traveller ("My toe is stuck in the tap" in Croatian), a brush-up lesson on boy-scout knots (for the soap-on-a-rope) and a useful bath-time keep-fit programme.

Back on dry land, grown-ups face a range of adult pop-up books. Worthiest is *The Art Pack* by Christopher and Helen Traylor and Ron van der Meer (Ebury Press, £19.99), billed as a "Unique, Three-Dimensional Tour Through the Creation of Art". The pop-up Parthenon is brilliant. There is even an idiot's guide, on tape, to the 20 greatest works of art. Moving into the stratosphere, Fritz Wegner's *Heaven on Earth* (Walker Books, £19.99), is for astrology nuts. Almost a pop-up, it has lots of ingenious slides and levers, and would last about two minutes with young children. The educational intent is undermined by a text which seems to draw on a thesaurus for inspiration. (Lies can be egocentric, arrogant, dominating, despicous, conceited and bimbastic).

For the amateur psychoanalyst *The Doodle Dictionary* (Robson Books, £3.99) is a minefield. Its compilers, Nancy Nelson and Alice Landry, are practising psychotherapists who interpret doodles. Inevitably, we're talking Freud. Frogs, rabbits, horses, even vineapples are considered sexual objects. Illustrated with guest doodles from Ezra Pound, J.P. Kennedy and Barbara Bush.

Where's Charles and Ditt (by Jim Becker, Andy Mayer, Bron Smith, Ten Speed Press, £5.95), perhaps a tactless question to ask, copies the successful format of the *Where's Walley?* children's books, with the royal couple artfully hidden in a succession of crowd scenes on royal tours. The supporting cast includes an estranged Duke and Duchess of York and a pack of wild corgis, but somewhere the satire falls flat.

Finally, *A Gambling Box*, edited by Kate Pullinger (Redstone Press, £14.99), contains an idiosyncratic anthology of information, from cock-fighting in Bali to ancient Babylonian board games. Most novelty books tend to end up in the bottom drawer; this one might come in useful when the Trivial Pursuit set makes its appearance after lunch on Boxing Day.

Most human life is here

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

Walter Ellis

If a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, then encyclopaedias, ever popular at this time of year, should be lethal. Yet because we do not read them, but only dip into them, the damage done seems slight.

Do not be fooled, however, into thinking that there is no risk involved. In the hands of a master, an encyclopaedia can be a powerful tool. Any young person placing regular reliance upon the new Oxford Illustrated Encyclopedia of People and Cultures, edited by Richard Hoggart (OUP, £25), would, for example, become an innocent victim of political correctness.

Consider Hoggart's treatment of sex and sexuality. Just seven headings cover the field directly. These are: Sex Differ-

ences (in psychology), Sexism, Sexual Behaviour, Sexual Harassment, Sexually-Transmitted Diseases and Sexual Offences. There is no mention of mutual attraction or desire, still less of pleasure. The whole business of boy meets girl sounds profoundly depressing, and quite possibly criminal, with an overwhelming emphasis on prejudice and mental disorder.

Drinking, predictably, is dealt with under the heading Alcohol Abuse, with no testament to the wonders of fine wines, old whiskies or foaming pints. Women, beings of infi-

nite variety, will find themselves written up under the headings: Women's Movement (developing world), Women's Movement (Western world) and Women's Suffrage, all beneath a photograph of a gaggle of protesters outside Greenham Common. The compensation is that the book is massively comprehensive, intelligent and seductive. The good doctor, a wise commentator, should rediscover joy.

J.M. Roberts's celebrated *History of the World* (Hollon, £29.95), reissued and illustrated for the Christmas market, is another deeply serious volume, but with a more traditional unity of theme: how the entire globe reached its present pretty pass. Pre-imperial Africa, normally a closed book, is revealed to us: so are the first men, the Bible, the arts, the Renaissance, Marx, the sciences, Chinese agriculture, Homer, even Ronnie and Mikhail in post-glacial loving embrace. Dr Roberts has probably forgotten more than most people ever knew — and it shows.

Guinness has come out with two excellent seasonal offerings. Its *Encyclopedia of World History* (Guinness, £21.95) while obviously less demanding than the Roberts version, is well structured into 10-minute sight bites and incorporates a useful end-section Factfinder. The companion *Encyclopedia of the Living World* (Guinness, £21.95) does the same job for the plant and animal kingdoms. Both are lavishly illustrated.

Finally, the *World Encyclopedia of 20th Century Murder*, by Jay Robert Nash (Headline, £25), all the gory details, complete with last moments and executions. Just the thing for a chilly Boxing Day night.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE SUFFERING FROM

GREAT WAKERING?

(ptcpl. v.b., panic which sets in when you badly need to go to the lavatory and cannot make up your mind about what book or magazine to take with you.)

HELP IS JUST INCHES AWAY!
(On the opposite side of this page in fact.)

CRACKERS for CHRISTMAS

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TIMES READER BOOK OFFER

The greatest chess battle of all time

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene

At last: the authoritative, move-by-move account of the meeting of the titans — Bobby Fischer and Boris Spassky, by International Grandmaster Raymond Keene, *The Times* chess correspondent.

After 20 years in the chess wilderness, the American champion Fischer returned to do battle with the Russian champion Spassky, the man he defeated for the 11th world championship in an epic struggle in Reykjavik, Iceland, in 1972.

The 30-game rematch was held in wartime Yugoslavia between September 2 and November 5 last for a record winner's purse of £2.6 million.

Raymond Keene was there and faithfully recorded it all. The dramatic chronicle starts with a detailed prelude



to the meeting and ends on Spassky's last, desperate move. His book, *Fischer-Spassky: The Return of a Legend*, £9.99, is a must for all chess lovers. And a great gift!

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... Times critics offer their selection of the best books for Christmas

Celebration of a golden age

The economy may lie in ruins but architectural books have never been more lavish. This Christmas the page goes to a sumptuous folio-sized volume *Sinan: Architect of Süleyman the Magnificent and the Ottoman Golden Age* by John Freely and Augusto Romano Burelli (Thames and Hudson, £45). Sinan, born of Christian parents and taken into service as a Janissary, was as great an architect as Michelangelo and was the author of two of the grandest of all Islamic mosques, the Süleymaniye in Istanbul and the Selimiye at Edirne, the latter built to eclipse the great dome of Santa Sophia. He was also the architect of a series of small domed mosques, as beautiful as any of the Greek Cross churches of Renaissance Italy.

The text though short, is penetrating and the photographs supplemented by clever cut-away drawings. One of these shows that the bell-bottomed minarets at Edirne contained triple inter-twining spiral staircases, capping the famous double flights at the Chateaux of Chambord.

John Whitehead's *The French Interior in the Eighteenth Century* (Lawrence King, £30) is a dazzlingly fresh book on a much worked theme. He combines a dealer's understanding of the way things are made, with great knowledge, lightly worn, of Parisian houses, chateaux and royal palaces. The text is spiced with amusing quotations from contemporary letters and journals. The illustrations are accompanied by long and observant captions. Particularly intriguing is a dice throwing machine, designed so backgammon could be played without the rattle and clatter of dice.

Wendell Garrett's *Classic America: The Federal Style and Beyond* (Rizzoli, £50) is a visually enthralling introduction to some of America's most beautiful buildings, ringing the changes by mixing domestic architecture with churches, court houses and capitols. Paul Rocheleau's photographs of interiors, often spread across two pages, give you the feeling of physically stepping into a room, and thanks to the persistent use of an old-fashioned plate camera even the smallest details are pin sharp. Many of the New England houses are the more beautiful for being photographed in the snow.

Brilliant photography by Jacqueline O'Brien also makes Desmond Guinness's *Great Irish Castles and Houses* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £30) a mesmerising read. Many of her exteriors are taken from a helicopter, combining architecture, gardens and wider landscape as in an 18th-century birds-eye

ARCHITECTURE

Marcus Binney

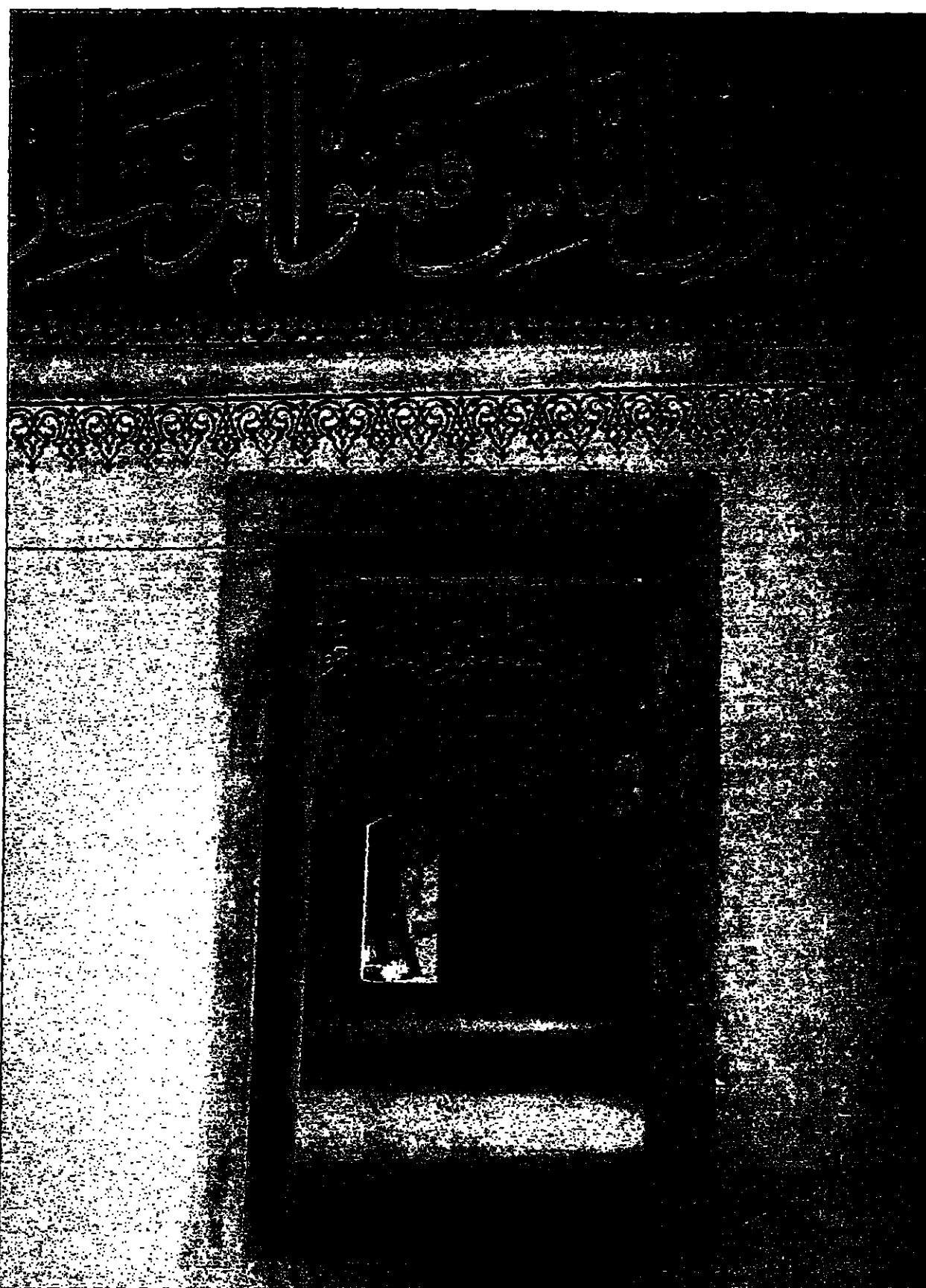
view. This leaves space for a much larger selection of interiors of each house in what would otherwise be a breathless gallop. Guinness writes with an intimacy and affection that only a lifetime of country house visiting can bring. North of the border, Hugh Candie's *Ancestral Houses of Scotland* (Collins & Brown, £14.99) is also strongly atmospheric and the text good on family history.

The desire to bring architecture to a wider audience is the main spring of *Adam Style and Regency Style* (Phaidon, £29.95 each) both by Steven Parisien. He shows how the Georgian house was put together from the front railings to the kitchen range. For a very grand present the answer is *Boughton House: The English Versailles* (Faber, £100). No one person could write authoritatively on every aspect of Boughton's architecture, interiors and landscape, and Tessa Murdoch, as editor, has done a masterly job in weaving contributions from 21 academics into a seamless row.

The late Canon Basil Clarke used to contend that he had set a record by visiting more than 11,000 English parish churches. Aspiring rivals could not do better than acquire a copy of Robert Harrison's *Shell Guide to English Parish Churches* (André Deutsch, £19.99). What makes this superior to Pevsner's county guides is that the entries give a feel for both the beauty of the setting and the atmosphere of the interior, qualities crucial in assessing how rewarding a church will be to visit.

Brian Bruce Taylor's *Pierre Charras: Designer and Architect* (Benedikt Taschen Verlag, £9.95) is first and foremost a study of the *Maison de Verre*, the 1930s house that had a transforming influence on today's high tech architects. Built of translucent bricks, like pavement lights, for a doctor who wanted consulting rooms with both strong natural light and privacy, the walls of glass have an unexpected affinity with the oriels in great Elizabethan houses such as Hardwick.

Barn: *The Art of a Working Building* (Casell, £25) by Elric Enderby, Alexander Greenwood and David Larkin has a text which consists entirely of extended captions but through handsome photographs and observant writing ennobles its subject. The interiors of converted barns in America are specially impressive. Using only natural wood, they are the modern counterpart of medieval great halls.



Master's touch: ceramic panels quoting extracts from the Koran in passages leading to rooms for meditation and prayer in the mosque at Kadirga Liman; from Sinan, published by Thames and Hudson. Photograph by Ara Güler

Now who said that first?

REFERENCE

Philip Howard

Reference books are suitable Christmas presents for the bookish, if you are not confident enough to inflict their reading on them, do not know whether they own the book already, and wish to avoid the amiable cop-out of a book-token. The fourth edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, edited by Angela Partridge (OUP, £25), is the biggest boat in the reference armada, beautifully designed and arranged. It has 40 per cent new entries, arranged alphabetically by authors from Ariza Brooker to Alice Walker, and Woody Allen to Julian Barnes. The trouble is that any bookish person is going to own a previous edition, which is more satisfactory than this new edition on the quotes that have become part of the literary freemasonry. It takes time for a quotation to become part of the parole of the nation, and too many of the modern quotations read like literary mayflies rather than parrots with a shelf-life for the centuries.

The *Bloomsbury Concise Dictionary of Quotations*, edited by Anne Sibbs and John Daintith (Bloomsbury, £12.99) is one of the genre of thesauruses arranged alphabetically by themes such as virtue and vice, rabbits and ruthlessness, snobbery and (invariably) the biggest entry sex.

The *Oxford Dictionary of Modern Slang*, edited by John Ayto and John Simpson (joint editors of *The Oxford English Dictionary*) (OUP, £13.95) preserves the latest of the most evanescent registers of language, with citations from rags and mags and literary authors. Why no "Essex girl"? Ed. *The Methuen Dictionary of Cliches*, edited by Christine Ammer (Methuen, £15.99) seems a perverse undertaking, like a collection of flu germs, since good writers are supposed to avoid clichés like the plague. Bathroom book for those who like to know who first plagiarised stiff upper lips.

Brewer's *Myth and Legend*, edited by J.C. Cooper (Casell, £12.99), brings in myths from cultures too exotic to be the founding fathers. If great giants of the world or horses in legend are your bag, here are herds of them. Brewer's *Names*, edited by that jolly lexicographer Adrian Room (Casell, £16.99), is useful and fun.

The *Times Guide to English Style and Usage*, edited by Simon Jenkins (Times Books, £7.99), gives the changing rules we make for English at the word laboratory. You do not have to agree with it all. I certainly don't.

Heard the one about the clown princes?

Recently I reviewed a book about a fat woman who became a famous thin one: the singer Maria Callas. Here we have a fat man who became almost a decade after Callas's diet, a famous thin one: the actor Peter Sellers. The connections, oddly, don't end there; like Callas's, Sellers's genius was elusive. Both stars went periodically off the boil and made a series of comebacks: both had startlingly bleak personal lives, and both finally went out of control. Both also died at the age of 54 — Sellers in 1980, three years after Callas.

Sellers was, frankly, better the younger and podgier he was. The poised anarchy of his comedy was never sharper than in his *Goon Show* days in the 1950s; and he turned in very decent performances in films such as *The Ladykillers*

James Woodall

(1956) and *The Naked Truth* (1958). His long-term problem seems to have been that he was almost schizoid. In a frank interview with Blake Edwards (director of the *Pink Panther* films) at the end of Michael Starr's *Peter Sellers: A Film History* (Robert Hale, £14.95), we read: "Sellers would have gone on to become crazier and crazier... I think he was so close to being certifiable, and I don't say that facetiously, that at some point in his life he would have... killed himself." Elsewhere Edwards suggests Sellers was a "paranoid schizophrenic".

This is all rather surprising. Can the succession of genial, downtrodden *hommes*

moyens sensuels played by Sellers, culminating in the epic buffoonery of *Inspector Clouseau*, have hidden some one quite so unstable? The answer is yes, but Starr's book is not the one to tell us about it. His 230-odd pages of dreary text trace Sellers's career through individualised accounts of his 43 films; and though reminding us how incomparable some of his performances were — in films such as *I'm All Right, Jack*, *Dr Strangelove* and *Being There* — Starr can only glance at the persistent, sometimes debilitating personality flaws that haunted Sellers's complex genius. For a full analysis, a real biography is called for.

Given Sellers's extraordinary range, an account of his life might run "The Many Faces of Peter Sellers". No such variety with Benny Hill: the

tubby cherub with the wicked grin and seaside postcard sense of humour had one age — about ten — for the three or four decades he had television audiences chortling everywhere. The most amazing thing about Hill was his exportability. Europe loved him: America doted on him. Thames Television dropped him in 1989, and he died three years later.

That, in essence, is the Hill story: a simple one of global success ending in petty sadness. The two biographies on offer here, one by Hill's "best friend" Dennis Kirkland, Benny: *The True Story* (Smith Gryphon, £15.99), the other by *Daily Express* columnist Margaret Forwood, *The Real Benny Hill* (Robson Books, £14.95), have a hard job embellishing

this. Hill did not lead an interesting life. Still, the authors only had seven months to get their hard cover obit ready for Christmas, so a gripping and revealing read from either is hardly to be expected.

William Hall's biggest mistake in *Titter Ye Not* (Grafton, £5.99 pbk), a flimsy life of Frankie Howerd, who died on the same day this year — Easter Day — as Hill, is that he attempts to be as witty in his tabloid prose as Howerd was in his stand-up routines. And Frankie was always best in the flesh (not an attempt at a Howerd joke). He led a more colourful life, too, than Hill, being, for starters, openly and promiscuously gay — not that Hall makes much of this.

Barry Took's anodyne double profile in *Star Turns*, (Weidenfeld & Nicolson,

£12.99) a homage to both comedians, touches on sex but is psychologically unilluminating. Rather, the book serves to show how different the comedians were — Hill a master of television, Howerd of working a live audience, as his brilliant 1990 performance at the Oxford Union showed.

Mel Smith and Griff Rhys Jones are from a younger comic generation. Their new show is on our screens, now. The dialogues collected in *Head to Head: Smith and Jones* (Fontana, £5.99), a stocking-filler pamphlet, are from a previous series. Jokes from crackers are what people read at Christmas, not old scripts. So you could, of course, use the book for laying the turkey remains on. Or not buy it, and watch the new show instead.

Preserving the image at any cost

Benedict Nightingale



Harrison and O'Toole: in the limelight, on and off stage

temptuous of others, ruthless in his pursuit of his own ends, snobbish, lecherous, envious, disloyal, misogynistic, and much else besides. His very last words, addressed to a solicitor's son from his hospital bed, were all too characteristic: "I'll tell you what you can do. You can drop dead."

True, he could occasionally be generous and, true, he probably suffered from feelings of insecurity; but does insecurity justify, say, his reaction to finding that one of his mistresses, Carole Landis, had overdosed on pills while he was shooting the film *Unfaithfully Yours*? Instead of calling

an ambulance, he opted for damage-limitation and image-control, and by the time a doctor saw her, she was past reviving.

Walker has, of course, the advantage of having a dead monster to anatomise. Writing about the living is a trickier enterprise. That is especially so if, like Albert Finney, they decline to be formally interviewed, and almost more so if, like Peter O'Toole, they insist on doing the interviewing themselves. Thus Quentin Falk breezes competently enough through Finney's career in *Albert Finney in Character* (Robson, £16.95)

but cannot explain why he has yet to make the impression on the theatre that his skill, his truculent assurance and his capacity for leadership should have ensured. Nor does O'Toole's roistering prose in *Loitering with Intent* (Macmillan, £14.99) — "also shall I drink hot gin and piss in your grave", he shouts across the years to a drinking chum implausibly called O'Liver — leave one with more than an impressionistic idea of the racy childhood and ruder youth he describes.

Still, Michael Coveney with *Maggie Smith: A Bright Particular Star* (Gollancz, £16.99) shows how to treat a subject who politely refuses to think herself worth writing or reading about. Go with the recusiveness, because it may be more significant than another's babble. Thus he gives us a readable and intelligent account of Maggie Smith's background and career, while suggesting why she is more, much more than a light comedienne. She is, as she said in an unguarded moment, "always living behind myself". Whether a cold Scots mother is enough to explain the pain and anger half-visible behind the immaculately timed drolleries, Coveney cannot of course say; but those feelings are there, quietly adding tension and texture — in short, depth.

THIS CHRISTMAS, GIVE THEM THE FUNNY LITTLE BOOK THAT SOOTHES AND CURES

GREAT WAKERING

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DOUGLAS ADAMS & JOHN LLOYD

A dictionary of things there aren't any words for yet

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مكتبة الأصل

No exemplary damages in public nuisance

Gibbons and Others v South West Water Services Ltd
Before Sir Thomas Bingham, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Stuart-Smith and Lord Justice Simon Brown
(Judgment November 16)

Where the plaintiffs' cause of action lay in public nuisance, a claim for exemplary damages was not available.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by the defendants, South West Water Services Ltd, from Mr Justice Wright (1992) 4 All ER 574 who had dismissed their application to strike out paragraphs from a master statement of claim seeking exemplary damages and aggravated damages in a group action brought by 180 plaintiffs who had drunk water which became contaminated in the defendants' drinking water system at their treatment works at Camelford, Cornwall.

Mr Christopher Symons, QC and Mr Jonathan Nash for the defendants; Mr John Melville Williams, QC, Mr Charles Pugh and Mr Simon Freedland for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE STUART-SMITH said that a number of causes of action had been alleged: *inter alia*, that there was a public nuisance for which the defendants were convicted in Exeter Crown Court and the plaintiffs had suffered particular damage; that the defendants were in breach of their statutory duty under the Water Act 1945, and were liable in negligence under the rule in *Rylands v Fletcher* (1868) LR 3 HL 330.

The plaintiffs had claimed exemplary and aggravated damages based on allegations that the

defendants' servants or agents as employees of a statutory body had acted in an arrogant and high-handed manner in ignoring customers' complaints, had wilfully misled them as to the true state of affairs by asserting that the water was safe to drink, had withheld accurate and consistent information as to the state of the water and had failed to give proper information as to the proper precautions necessary to minimise the ill effects of drinking it.

The plaintiffs asserted that they had consumed the water for longer than they would otherwise have done and that when they discovered the truth of the matter their feelings of indignation were justifiably aroused by the high-handed manner in which the defendants had dealt with the matter.

The judge had refused to strike out the claims for exemplary and aggravated damages since he considered that it was arguable that the plaintiffs could recover such damages for the tort of nuisance.

In relation to exemplary damages Mr Symons had submitted, in reliance on the combined effect of *Rookes v Barnard* [1964] AC 1129 and *Brown v Cassell & Co Ltd* [1972] AC 1027, that such a claim had to pass two tests:

1. It had to be in respect of a cause of action for which prior to 1964 such an award had been made and 2. It had to fall within one of the two categories identified by Lord Devlin in *Rookes v Barnard*, namely (a) where there had been oppressive, arbitrary or unconstitutional action by the servants of the government and (b) where the defendant's conduct had been calculated by him to make a profit

for himself which might exceed the compensation payable.

Mr Symons had submitted that there was no case prior to 1964 where exemplary damages had been awarded for nuisance. The contrary argument was that there was no limitation of exemplary damages to specific torts where they had been awarded prior to 1964 and if there was, then nuisance was one such case.

It was not in the speech of Lord Devlin that one found the limitation for which Mr Symons contended but in the speeches of four of their Lordships in *Brown v Cassell*. His Lordship reviewed the speeches of Lord Atkin, Lord Macmillan, Lord Canavan (at p1076), of Lord Wilberforce (at p1114), of Lord Diplock (at p1130-1131) and of Lord Reid (at p1086). In his Lordship's opinion those extracts supported the view that exemplary damages were confined to those torts where authority had previously recognised that they could have been awarded.

His Lordship said that there was nothing in the speeches of the other members of the House which showed a contrary view. The *dicta* on the point were *obiter*, but clearly of the highest authority and was not seriously argued by Mr Melville Williams that the court should not follow them.

His Lordship referred to a series of decisions where it had been suggested that exemplary damages might be awarded in tort cases of discrimination cases and to *Guppies (Bridport) Ltd v Brookings* (1983) 14 HLR 1 where exemplary damages were awarded for private nuisance. However, in those cases the point now in issue had not been argued.

There was no binding Court of Appeal authority which compelled the court to disregard the House of Lords *dicta* in *Brown v Cassell*. According to his Lordship would hold that before an award of exemplary damages could be made by any court or tribunal the tort must have been one in respect of which such an award was made prior to 1964.

His Lordship referred to *Bell v Midland Railway Co* (1861) 10 CBNS 287, which might properly be regarded as a case of private nuisance. That was an entirely different class of case from public nuisance. There was no case prior to 1964 of exemplary damages being awarded to a plaintiff who proved particular damage resulting from public nuisance and his Lordship would not extend the remedy to such a case.

If his Lordship were wrong on that issue, the case in any event did not arguably fall within either of Lord Devlin's categories.

At the relevant time, the defendants were a nationalised body set up under statute for a commercial purpose to supply water. They had since become privatised.

Although it was conceivable that governmental functions could be delegated or entrusted to a nationalised industry, it could not be argued that the defendants' servants or agents were performing such a function. Their conduct was not an exercise of executive power derived from government.

Nor could it possibly be said that the defendants continued the nuisance for the purpose of gaining some pecuniary or other advantage. What the plaintiffs pleaded amounted to an attempt by the defendants to cover up the fact that they had committed

a tort. Their object might have been to limit the amount of damages payable to the claimant, but that was an entirely different concept from that involved in the second category.

There was one aspect of the case which made it peculiarly unsuited for an award of exemplary damages, the number of plaintiffs. Unless all their claims were quantified by the court at the same time, how was the court to fix and apportion the punitive element of the damages? His Lordship referred to the further difficulties which such a problem would present.

His Lordship concluded that the claim for aggravated damages should also be struck out if the plaintiffs experienced greater or more prolonged pain and suffering because the nuisance continued for longer than it should have done, or they drank more contaminated water with ill effect that was a manner for which they were entitled to be compensated by way of general damages.

Likewise if uncertainty as to the true position caused by the defendants' lack of frankness led to real anxiety and distress that was an element for which the plaintiffs would be entitled to compensation under general damages for suffering, but anger and indignation would not be a proper subject for compensation. It was neither pain nor suffering.

His Lordship would allow the appeal.

Lord Justice Simon Brown agreed and the Master of the Rolls delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Herbert, Smith, Tomlinson, Naylor, Shaw, Smith, Spradley, Bodmin and John Whiting & Co, Camelford.

Regina v Governor of Brixton Prison, Ex parte Osman (No 5)

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Osman (No 2)

Before Lord Justice Kennedy and Lord Justice Waterhouse
(Judgment November 20)

If the Home Secretary considered that an application for a writ of *habeas corpus* by a person awaiting extradition did not comply with the requirements of section 14(2) of the Administration of Justice Act 1960 then he could proceed with arrangements for the return of the applicant to the requesting state.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in *Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Osman* (No 2) dismissing Lorrain Esme Osman's ninth application for a writ of *habeas corpus* and dismissing an application for judicial review of the Home Secretary's decision of November 2 to take immediate steps to convey him into the jurisdiction of the Government of Hong Kong, despite the existence of outstanding *habeas corpus* proceedings.

Section 11 of the Extradition Act 1989 provides: (2) A person committed to prison shall not be returned... (b) if an application for *habeas corpus* is made in his case, so long as proceedings on that application are pending.

Lord Justice Simon Brown agreed and the Master of the Rolls delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Herbert, Smith, Tomlinson, Naylor, Shaw, Smith, Spradley, Bodmin and John Whiting & Co, Camelford.

LORD JUSTICE KENNEDY, giving the judgment of the court,

said that the court was satisfied that the evidence put forward by the applicant as the basis for his *habeas corpus* application was not fresh evidence.

That finding was sufficient to dispose of the case because, in accordance with section 14(2) of the Administration of Justice Act 1960, no application for *habeas corpus* was or could be made on the same grounds without fresh evidence.

The application for judicial review became academic because the circumstances which might have rendered the proposed section 14(2) application illegal, namely that there had been an application for *habeas corpus*, did not exist.

It was relevant to appreciate that section 14(2), if it required the making of an application, and section 11(2)(b) of the Extradition Act 1989 could only operate to prevent a person committed from returning if an application for *habeas corpus* was made in his case.

Mr Mansfield had attempted to meet the difficulty which his client faced in the light of his conclusions by submitting that once a person in Mr Osman's position started legal proceedings on a second or subsequent occasion with the object of obtaining a writ of *habeas corpus* then the provisions of section 11(2)(b) came into operation to prevent the return of the person to the requesting state, because it was then for the court to decide if there had been compliance with section 14(2) of the 1960 Act.

Mr Mansfield had submitted that otherwise the unsatisfactory position might arise, as it had in *M v Home Office* (The Times December 2, 1991; [1992] QB 270), of the court finding that the secretary

weighing up whether it was appropriate to bring proceedings.

It was in his Lordship's judgment desirable so far as possible for the procedure to be conducted quickly, relatively cheaply and efficiently. He considered that it would be likely to lead to delay and expense.

A procedure which involved the health authority bringing its documents into one place, having them copied, paged and accompanying what was disclosed with some sort of list identifying where different categories of documents were was clearly a form of procedure which should be aimed at so far as was possible.

Here, Mr Mansfield had required the health authority to produce, in the first instance, an itemised list of every document under the sun which the authority might have in its possession.

In his Lordship's judgment that was very far away from what was necessary or desirable given that it was likely to be the wish of the client that the manner was proceeded with with reasonable expedition.

If the original documents were copied and paged then, if any dispute arose as to whether a document had been disclosed at an early voluntary stage, solicitors would be able to refer to the relevant categories of documents, but also of being prepared to have no hesitation in forming the view that all that was necessary was the second of those alternatives.

Solicitors: Preston Goldburn, Falmouth; Bevan Ashford, Bristol.

Under article 15(5)(a) of Regulation No 17, no fine might be imposed for actions following notification provided they remained within the limits of the activity described therein.

That benefit to undertakings having notified an agreement or a concerted practice was the consideration for the risk which it ran by itself declaring the agreement or concerted practice.

Such an undertaking risked not only a finding that the agreement or practice infringed article 85(1) or of a refusal to apply article 85(3) and to put an end to the agreement or practice which it had notified, but also of being penalised by a fine for its activity prior to notification.

Moreover, those provisions, in so far as they encouraged undertakings to notify agreements, thereby reduced the investigative tasks of the Commission.

Consequently, the general scheme of those provisions implied that undertakings which had made notification under the conditions laid down in Regulation No 17 might, as a result, benefit from certain advantages.

An interpretation of the regulation which would enable member states to use as evidence information contained in those notifications in order to justify national penalties would substantially reduce the scope of the advantages granted to undertakings by the provisions of article 15(5) of the Regulation.

It followed that, as for information contained in replies to requests for information submitted on the basis of article 11 of Regulation No 17, member states might not use information contained in requests and notifications provided by articles 2, 4 and 5 of that regulation as evidence.

On those grounds, the Court ruled: Article 214 of the EEC Treaty and the provisions of Regulation No 17 were to be interpreted as meaning that member states, in the context of their powers for the application of national law and Community competition rules, might not use as evidence either unpublished information contained in replies to requests for information submitted to undertakings pursuant to article 11 of Regulation No 17 nor information contained in requests and notifications provided by articles 2, 4 and 5 of that regulation.

Such information was to remain within the internal ambit of those authorities and could only be used in order to assess whether or not it was

Refusal to disclose location of observation post

Austin v Director of Public Prosecutions, Blake v Same
Before Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Roch
(Judgment October 15)

A judge was entitled to refuse a request for the disclosure of the location of premises used by police as an observation post where the occupier of the premises feared harassment, rather than actual violence, as a result of disclosure.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held dismissing the appeals by way of case stated of John Austin and John Blake against the dismissal by Judge Lawrence and two justices at Knightsbridge Crown Court on March 16, 1990 of their appeals

against conviction for indecent behaviour in a churchyard, contrary to section 2 of the Ecclesiastical Courts Jurisdiction Act 1860.

Mr Andrew Jefferies for both appellants; Mr Timothy Nash for the prosecution.

LORD JUSTICE WATKINS said that the evidence against the appellants had come from two officers who had watched their activities from an observation post.

The police officers had given evidence that if the location of the observation post was disclosed, the occupier of the premises would be in danger of, at least, harassment from people such as the appellants.

The judge had concluded that the location should not be disclosed. The appellants had argued that

guidelines set out by the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) in *R v Johnson (Kenneth)* [1981] WLR 1377 and *R v Hewitt; R v Davis* (The Times January 1; [1992] 95 Cr App R 81) did not apply.

Those cases had involved the threat of violence, if not severe violence, of which the occupier was aware. The appellants had argued that less than that would not do.

In his Lordship's judgment, to suggest that harassment, as opposed to violence, was not contemplated by those guidelines was untenable.

Mr Justice Roch agreed.

Solicitors: Bindman, Partners, Euston and Mildred & Beaumont, Barncroft, CPS, Inner London.

Employer's safety obligation

Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council v Malrod Insulations Ltd
Before Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Tudor Evans
(Judgment November 13)

An employer's duty within section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 applied to all employees and was not confined to those engaged in the specific process for which particular plant was made available.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Tudor Evans) so stated on November 13 when allowing the appeal by case stated of Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council from the dismissal by Mr Recorder of the Trade Marks Act 1938 included a manual issued to its sales distributors by a pyramid selling company.

The sales distributors were part of the public for the purposes of the section, and comparisons in the

engaged in the work in question. There would be a breach of duty if they were exposed to risk of injury because of a defect in plant provided.

A breach of duty occurred when unsafe plant was made available although it was not being and had

not been used. The duty to provide safe plant did not only arise when men were actually at work.

Section 2 created a duty to ensure safety when employees came to work and that plant provided would be safe for use when employees came to use it.

Section 2 created a duty to ensure safety when employees came to work and that plant provided would be safe for use when employees came to use it.

Manual in breach

Chanel Ltd v L'Oréal (UK) Ltd
Before Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Tudor Evans
(Judgment November 13)

The words "an advertising circular or other advertisement issued to the public" in section 4(1)(b) of the Trade Marks Act 1938 included a manual issued to its sales distributors by a pyramid selling company.

The sales distributors were part of the public for the purposes of the section, and comparisons in the

manual between the defendants' expensive perfumes, marketed as "Ecoeur", and the plaintiffs' products were unlawful.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Beldam and Mr Justice Tudor Evans) so held on October 27, rejecting the defendants' appeal from a judgment of Mr Justice Millett on May 22, 1991, that their manual had infringed the plaintiffs' registered trade marks.

The purpose of a request for information addressed to an undertaking on the basis of article 11 of Regulation No 17 was to provide the Commission with the information of fact or of law necessary to enable it to exercise its powers.

The prohibitive value of information thereby notified and the conditions under which that information might be relied upon against the undertakings were, consequently, defined by Community law and limited exclusively to procedures governed by Regulation 17.

It was not the purpose of the request for information to provide evidence intended to be used by the member states in the context of procedures governed by national law.

The transmission of information thereby acquired by the Commission to the competent authorities of member states, on the basis of article 10(1) of Regulation No 17 had a dual purpose.

On the one hand, it was intended to inform member states of the Community procedures concerning undertakings established in their territory and, on the other hand, to ensure that the Commission was better informed by enabling it to compare information given by undertakings with indications and observations which might be provided by the member states concerned.

The transmission of that information to the member states did not in itself imply that the latter might use it in circumstances which might call in question the application of Regulation No 17 and the fundamental rights of undertakings.

By prohibiting the use of information acquired pursuant to article 11 of Regulation No 17 for purposes other than those for which they had been requested and by requiring the Commission, as well as the competent authorities of the member states and their officials and agents, to respect professional secrecy, article 20 of that regulation was intended to protect the rights of undertakings.

The rights of the defence, which had to be respected from the stage of the

European Law Report

Limits to use of information given to states by Commission

Dirección General de Defensa de la Competencia v Asociación Española de Banca Privada and Others
Case C-67/91

Before O. Due, President and Judges R. J. G. Kappelen, G. F. Mancini, C. N. Kouris, J. C. Monchoix, M. D. de Velasco, M. Zuleeg, J. L. Murray and D. A. O. Edward
Advocate General F. G. Jacobs
(Opinion June 10)

Notification of information by the Commission to the competent authorities of the member states of information acquired pursuant to Regulation No 17 did not imply that those authorities might use such information in circumstances which might call in question the application of that regulation or the fundamental rights of undertakings.

The Court of Justice of the European Communities so held in replying to questions submitted to it by the Tribunal de Defensa de la Competencia (Competition Court) Madrid, for a preliminary ruling under article 177.

Proceedings had been started by the Dirección General de Defensa de la Competencia (Directorate General for Competition) ("DGDC") against the Asociación Española de Banca Privada ("AEB") and seven banks.

It was alleged that, with regard to certain services and bank commissions, they had infringed the Spanish Law No 110/1963 of July 20, 1963 on the elimination of anti-competitive practices.

The banks argued that those proceedings originated not from various requests for information submitted in early 1987 by the DGDC, but in earlier acts of the national authorities adopted on the basis of information gathered by the Commission pursuant to Regulation No 17 of the Council of February 6, 1962, the first regulation implementing articles 85 and 86 of the Treaty (OJ, English Special Edition 1962, p87).

That information had been submitted in March 1988 by the AEB and the seven banks in order to obtain the negative clearance provided for by article 2 of Regulation 17 or the exemption provided for by article 85(3), as well as in replies to requests for

information addressed to the banks by the Commission during March 1987 pursuant to article 11 of Regulation No 17.

The AEB and the banks maintained that the information could not be used by the national authorities in order to eliminate infringements against national competition rules.

In those circumstances, the Tribunal de Defensa de la Competencia stayed its proceedings and submitted four questions to the Court of Justice of the European Communities for a preliminary ruling.

In its judgment, the European Court of Justice ruled as follows:

Regulation No 17 conferred on the Commission wide powers to make investigations and to obtain information.

The Eighth Recital in the preamble to that Regulation made it clear that the Commission must be empowered, throughout the Common Market, to require such information to be supplied and to undertake such investigations as were necessary to bring to light infringements of articles 85 and 86.

Thus a procedure of preliminary investigation, separate from the adversarial procedure laid down in article 19 of the Regulation had been established for the purpose of which was to enable the Commission to obtain the information and documentation necessary in order to check the actual existence and scope of a specific factual and legal situation.

The provisions of Regulation No 17 defined the circumstances in which member states were associated with procedures undertaken by the Commission.

According to paragraphs 1 and 2 of article 10 of the Regulation, the Commission was to transmit to the competent authorities of the member states, without delay, a copy of the applications and notifications together with copies of the most important documents lodged with the Commission with a view to establishing the existence of infringements of articles 85 or 86 of the Treaty or of obtaining negative clearance or a decision to apply article 85(3).

The competent authorities of the member states were thus enabled to express their views on those procedures.

Finally, article 20(1) of the Regulation provided that "information acquired as a result of the application of articles 11, 12, 13 and 14 shall be used only for the purpose of the relevant request or investigation".

According to paragraph 2 of that article which gave effect to article 214 of the Treaty relating to professional secrecy, the competent authorities of the member states, as well as their officials and other servants were bound not to disclose information acquired by them as a result of the application of Regulation No 17 and which was of the kind covered by the obligation of professional secrecy.

By its questions, the national court sought, in substance, to establish whether the national authorities might, for the purposes of application of Community law or national competition law, use information which had been notified to them by the Commission and which was contained, on the one hand, in the replies to requests for information addressed to undertakings on the basis of article 11 of the Regulation, and, on the other hand, in the applications for negative clearance and notifications of agreements of decisions and practices provided by articles 2, 4 and 5 of the Regulation.

It was appropriate to emphasise that the questions submitted related to the use by national authorities of information acquired by the Commission which had not been published pursuant to the provisions of article 19(3) of Regulation No 17 and which had not been mentioned in a decision of the Commission published under the conditions laid down in article 21 of that regulation.

Use of information acquired pursuant to article 11

The reply to the questions submitted by the national court required interpretation of article 20(1) of Regulation No 17 to which it was necessary to add article 11(3) of the same regulation which emphasised that the request for information submitted to an undertaking was to indicate the legal basis and the purpose of the request.

In order to interpret those provisions, it was necessary to take into consideration the general scheme of Regulation No 17, the purpose of provisions

laying down the procedure for requests for information as well as requirements relating to respect for the general principles of Community law and in particular for fundamental rights.

The purpose of a request for information addressed to an undertaking on the basis of article 11 of Regulation No 17 was to provide the Commission with the information of fact or of law necessary to enable it to exercise its powers.

The prohibitive value of information thereby notified and the conditions under which that information might be relied upon against the undertakings were, consequently, defined by Community law and limited exclusively to procedures governed by Regulation 17.

It was not the purpose of the request for information to provide evidence intended to be used by the member states in the context of procedures governed by national law.

The transmission of information thereby acquired by the Commission to the competent authorities of member states, on the basis of article 10(1) of Regulation No 17 had a dual purpose.

On the one hand, it was intended to inform member states of the Community procedures concerning undertakings established in their territory and, on the other hand, to ensure that the Commission was better informed by enabling it to compare information given by undertakings with indications and observations which might be provided by the member states concerned.


The transmission of that information to the member states did not in itself imply that the latter might use it in circumstances which might call in question the application of Regulation No 17 and the fundamental rights of undertakings.

By prohibiting the use of information acquired pursuant to article 11 of Regulation No 17 for purposes other than those for which they had been requested and by requiring the Commission, as well as the competent authorities of the member states and their officials and agents, to respect professional secrecy, article 20 of that regulation was intended to protect the rights of undertakings.


The rights of the defence, which had to be respected from the stage of the

Luxembourg


BBC1

- 6.00 **Coast** (50510) 6.30 **Breakfast News** (5873907)
9.05 **Kilroy**, Robert Kilroy-Silk chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (3000428) 9.45 **Rose King**, Game show. The guest is EastEnders actress Nicola Stapleton (5) (5430050)
10.00 **News**, regional news and weather (7285572) 10.05 **Playdays**, For the very young (1) (5) (5222881)
10.30 **Good Morning**, ... with Anne and Nick. Weekday magazine series presented by Anne Diamond and Nick Owen. (5) With News (5873907) and weather at 11.00 and 12.00 (42170572)
12.15 **Pebble Mill**, Alan Titchmarsh celebrates the revival of the musical *Me and My Girl* with Gary Wilmot and Jessica Ward, who have appeared in the West End production (5) (5822881) 12.55 **Regional News** and weather (7892510)
1.00 **One O'Clock News** with Philip Hayton. (Ceefax) Weather (58688)
1.30 **Neighbours**, (Ceefax) (5) (42190572) 1.50 **Going For Gold**, General knowledge quiz with European contestants. The questionmaster is the effervescent Henry Kelly (5) (4219188)
2.15 **Snooker**, Quarter-final action in the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship, from the Guild Hall, Liverpool (5) (5822881)
3.50 **Puppydog Tales** (3177094) 3.55 **Model** (5822881) 4.05 **Star Pets**, Peter Simon continues his quest for the Star Pet of 1992 (5) (5867861) 4.15 **Get Your Own Back**, Stupidly game show (5) (1557655) 4.30 **Kewin & Co.**, Episode three of the six-part comedy (5) (5822881)
4.55 **Newsnight** (5877060) 5.05 **Blue Peter**, Includes the latest news of the Blue Peter Care appeal. (Ceefax) (5) (5822881)
5.35 **Neighbours**, (Ceefax) (5) (42190572) 5.55 **Neighbours**, (Ceefax) (5) (42190572) 6.00 **Six O'Clock News** with Anne Ford and Chris Lowe. (Ceefax) Weather (58688)
6.30 **Regional News** and weather (7892510) 6.55 **Neighbours**, (Ceefax) (5) (42190572) 7.00 **The Pope** introduced by Mark Franklin (5) (4355)
7.30 **EastEnders**, (Ceefax) (5) (423)
8.00 **Living Dangerously: The Werthing and the Teabag**, ... CHOICE: A somewhat shaggy story from Kenya manages to make an unlikely link between a less than handsome animal and the Western world's cuppa. Cleverly filmed by the German biologist Reinhard Radtke, a former werthing who became a lion tamer in the Aberdare national park and seeks refuge in the private garden of a tea and coffee planter. This is the signal for Richard Brier's jolly commentary to change tack. A conventional wildlife celebration turns into an eco-lecture about the dangers of crop-spraying and cutting down even more forest so that we can continue to enjoy our intake of caffeine. The point is well made, especially as the murdered trees could carry a cure for cancer or even AIDS. Equally, however, the developing world needs money and coffee is its third largest export. (Ceefax) (5) (5125)
8.30 **Sitting Pretty**, New comedy series by John Sullivan of *Only Fools and Horses* fame. A new rich East End family, the Stanning family, over her less fortunate family. (Ceefax) (5) (5125)
9.00 **One O'Clock News** with John Humphrys. (Ceefax) Regional news and weather (9404)
9.30 **Smith and Jones**, Mel and Griff with another selection of comedy sketches. (Ceefax) (5) (40937)
10.00 **One Foot in the Grave**, Murder and mystery quickly follow one another when Victor dies at his veterinary clinic. Starring Richard Wilson, Annette Crosbie and, this week, veteran comedian Jimmy Jewel (1). (Ceefax) (19539). Northern Ireland: Spodgitt

Bringing the politicians to book: Tim Wainwright (10.30pm)
- 10.30 **Question Time** presented by Peter Sissons in Norwich. The guests are employment secretary Gillian Shepherd; shadow home affairs minister Joan Ruddock; Lorna Fitzgibbon, president of the Union of Students; and Tim Wainwright, chief executive of the bookelling chain (27733). Northern Ireland: One Foot in the Grave 11.00 **Question Time**
11.30 **Snooker**, The closing frames of the last quarter-finals of the UK championship (58688). 12.00 **Law and Order** 12.45-1.35 **Snooker** 12.20am **Weather** (2227263)



BBC2

- 8.00 **Breakfast News** (4190248)
8.15 **Westminster**, A round up of business from both Houses (8444404)
9.00 **Daytime on Two**, Educational programmes
9.30 **Adrian Ship**, Topical western magazine presented by Helen Madden and Andrew Miller (581591)
3.00 **News and weather** (5868882) followed by **Westminster Live** introduced by Ian Macwhirter and John Cole. Includes prime minister's questions (7470355) 3.50 **News**, regional news and weather (1298978)
4.00 **Snooker**, Quarter-final action from the Royal Liver Assurance UK championship, introduced by David Vine (5822881)
5.00 **From the Edge**, Bi-monthly magazine series from the BBC's Disability Programmes Unit featuring news of the arts, politics and current affairs from disabled reporters (2133)
5.30 **Food and Drink**, A repeat of Tuesday's programme, which included a recipe for Irish stew and Michael Barry preparing spiced ice cream (5) (588)
6.00 **Film: The Flame and the Arrow** (1950) starring Bob Lancaster, Virginia Mayo and Robert Douglas. Stylish swashbuckler set in medieval Lumbury about the leader of a group of mountain lions doing battle against a despotic ruler. Directed by Jacques Tourneur (58681). Wales: Inside English 6.15 **Italianissimo** 6.30 **Mosaic** 7.00 **Advice Shop**
7.30 **First Sight**, South east current affairs series. Northern Ireland: The European Challenge; Wales: Dad's Army; Midlands: Midland Railway; North, North-east and North-west: Close Up North; South: Southern Eye; South-west: Close Up; West: Close Up West (715)

Is Spain on the right track? Julia Sevilla reports (8.00pm)
- 8.00 **The Essential History of Europe**, The third in a series of 12 films about the member states of the EC looks at how Spain has changed since Franco through the eyes of young journalists Julia Sevilla (5) (5817)
8.30 **Top Gear**, Includes road tests on two powerful four-wheel drive saloons — Ford's new Escort Cosworth and the Vauxhall Calibra turbo. Plus a behind-the-scenes report on the Lombard RAC rally (5) (9132)
9.00 **Absolutely Fabulous**, Comic comedy written by and starring Jennifer Saunders set in London's fashion PR world. This week Edina (Saunders) and her friend Patsy (Joanna Lumley) invade Provence. (Ceefax) (7046)
9.30 **We Have Ways of Making You Think: The Power of Soap**, ... CHOICE: Laurence Rees concludes his superb series on media manipulation by looking at the political impact of popular television. President Ceausescu of Romania mirrored the mood of the people when he banned much-loved Western imports such as the *Oceanic Line* and *Dallas* and filled the screen with lurid propaganda. Romanians responded by putting up illegal serials to receive programmes from Bulgaria, one of the first acts of defiance against the regime. In India Rajiv Gandhi came to regret his decision to allow the screening of a 76-part soap, *Ramayan*. It drew audiences of 650 million and his state was recruited by the main opposition party. In Peru a Terry Wogan figure with no political experience used his television fame to become mayor of Lima. Many who voted for him now wish he'd stayed with the box. (282881)
10.20 **10 x 10: Touching Humanity**, A documentary look at the art of granite sculpting (1) (48201)
10.30 **Newsnight** with Jeremy Paxman (49771)
11.15 **The Late Show**, Arts (5822881) (5) (174978)
11.55 **Later with Jools Holland**, Music series. Tonight's guests include New York new wave rock group Television, John Cale of the Velvet Underground and the Irish singer with the lived-in voice, Mary Coughlan (58288)
12.30am **Behind the Headlines**, Jeffrey Archer and Labour MP Tony Benn debate press freedom and the future of English Heritage (21737). 1.00 **Weather** (5822881), Ends at 1.10
3.00 **BBC Select: RCM Nursing Update** (7821). Ends at 4.00

ITV LONDON

- 6.00 **TV-am** (1391828)
9.25 **Keynotes**, Music quiz game hosted by Alistair Dival (4643662)
9.55 **Thames News** (5803011)
10.00 **The Time ... The Place ...**, Topical discussion programme (403571)
10.35 **This Morning**, Magazine series (50083171)
12.10 **The Ricklids**, The first of a new series of children's puppet adventures (281455)
12.30 **ITN Lunchtime News** with Sonia Russell and Nicholas Owen. (Ceefax) Weather (585510) 1.05 **Thames News** (5810423)
1.15 **Home and Away**, Australian family drama serial. (Ceefax) (177249)
1.45 **A Country Practice**, Medical drama serial set in the Australian outback (18222)
2.15 **TV Weekly**, Anne Diamond goes behind the scenes of popular ITV and Channel 4 programmes. *Top Gear* takes us into the archives (151201) 2.45 **Take the High Road** (5822245)
3.10 **ITN News headlines** (5904265) 3.15 **Thames News headlines** (5903538) 3.20 **GP**, Medical drama set in a suburban Australian surgery (280878)
3.50 **The Ricklids** (1) (5812152) 3.55 **Captain Zed and the Zee Zone**, Animation (5) (137857) 4.20 **Rolf's Cartoon Club** presented by Rolf Harris (4148775) 4.45 **Bad Influence**, Computer games series (586888)
5.10 **Blockbusters**, General knowledge quiz for teenagers, presented by Bob Holness (5877336)
5.40 **Early Evening News** with John Suchet. (Ceefax) Weather (121171) 5.55 **Thames News** (1) (585930)
6.00 **Home and Away** (1), (Ceefax) (355)
6.30 **Thames News** (5871)
7.00 **Emmerdale**, Drama serial set in the Yorkshire Dales. (Ceefax) (5822881)
7.30 **Jimmy's**, Real-life dramas concerning the penguins and staff of St James's Hospital, Leeds (5) (591)

Exposing a squinting scam: Christopher Ellison (8.00pm)
- 8.00 **The Bill: Into the Mine**, After a hoard of stolen goods is found in a flat on the notorious Tinkers estate the suspects try to do a deal with DI Bunsell (Christopher Ellison) offering him information about a squinting scam on the estate. (Ceefax) (171)
8.30 **This Week: Vendetta on Berger's Island**, An investigation into claims of corruption and blackmail within the Jersey police force (Ceefax) (4978)
9.00 **Remembrance of the Bailey**, When Horace and Hilda are invited to spend a stay with a distant cousin's country seat, Horace discovers the invitation was not entirely motivated by the desire to see them but to help unravel the mystery death of a bag lady found in the estate's lake. (Ceefax) (1133)
10.00 **News at Ten** with Trevor McDonald (Ceefax) Weather (58797) 10.30 **Thames News** (5822881)
10.40 **OT**, The featured film this week is *Of Mice and Men*. There is also a review of the stage revival of *Noël Coward's Hay Fever* (5) (742133)
11.15 **Prisoner: Cell Block B** (582242)
12.00am **Alfred Hitchcock Presents: Deathtrap and If Looks Could Kill**, Two tales with a twist at the ending (717350)
1.05 **Film: Devils of Darkness** (1984) starring William Sylvester. Chiller about a writer who discovers a satanic cult thriving in a small village. Led by a 400-year-old vampire, directed by Lance Comfort (783032) 2.40 **The Twilight Zone: The Cold Equations**, A tale of the supernatural (1) (463447)
3.00 **Kojak**, The New York detective's investigations into the murder of a hoodlum leads to a teenager being the prime suspect. Starring Telly Savalas (1) (77447)
4.00 **Motorcycle Special**, Racing from Donington (22178)
4.30 **ITN News** (1) (5) (22244) 5.00 **VideoFusion** (1) (41355)
5.30 **ITN Morning News** with Phil Roman (48992). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 **Cartoons** (21510) 7.00 **The Big Breakfast** (36369)
9.00 **You Bet Your Life**, American game show (5) (14084)
9.30 **Schools** (585189) 12.00 **The Parliament Programme** (94220)
12.30 **Sesame Street**, Early learning series. The guest is Tine Day (25881) 1.30 **Take 5**, Children's entertainment (45442)
2.00 **Film: The House on 92nd Street** (1945, b/w). ... CHOICE: Henry Hathaway's spy thriller is based on the true story of an FBI agent who infiltrated Nazi espionage to discover who had been leaking American atom bomb secrets to the Germans. The film was produced by Louis de Rochemont and follows the urgent, naturalistic style of his famous *March of Time* newsreels, even down to the booming commentary. The use of real locations gave a quasi-documentary feel which was enhanced by the casting of many of the parts with non-professional actors, including FBI personnel. This impetus towards realism became very influential in the post-war American cinema, reaching its apogee with *The Naked City*. William Eythe, a name not much remembered these days, plays the secret agent with the Swedish actress, Signe Hasso, as the leader of the spy ring (58067)
3.35 **Film: Paleface** (1921, b/w). A Buster Keaton short (2785886)
4.00 **Family Pride**, Soap about a Midlands-based Asian family (5) (220)
4.30 **Reflex** to One, Fast-moving general knowledge quiz (5) (404)
5.00 **The Oprah Winfrey Show**, The guests are fathers and sons who have had or are having conflicts (5) (5822133)
5.55 **The Magic Roundabout** (1) (53572) 6.00 **The Word — Access**, All Areas (5) (997) 6.30 **Gamesmaster**, Computer games (249)
7.00 **Channel 4 News** with Jon Snow and Fiona Murch (Teletext) Weather (572133) 7.50 **Comment** (724930)

Bird of a feather: Winston puts on his glad rags (8.00pm)
- 8.00 **The Black Bag: The Gender Bender**, A film celebrating masculine femininity (6713)
8.30 **Rising Damp**, Ragsy and his permanent tenants come under the spell of a new arrival who claims he is a mystic (1) (Teletext) (5220)
9.00 **Critical Eye: Algeria — Women at War**, ... CHOICE: The eight-year struggle for independence from France put Algerian women for the first time at the centre of their country's history. Before the war they were excluded from political life and could not vote. During the conflict they became urban guerrillas, fought in the countryside and took part in civil resistance. Some were arrested and tortured. But when independence was won they were expected to return to their passive, domestic roles. The film uses interviews to plot the achievements and disappointments of Algerian women over the past 40 years. In 1988 hopes were raised when the party rule gave way to multi-party democracy. At the same time a resurgence of Muslim fundamentalism seemed to put the women's cause back. It is a cogent film with more resonances than might be expected for a British audience (9775)
10.00 **The Big Battalions**, Episode two of the five-part drama about faith and fanaticism. (Teletext) (5) (2862)
11.00 **Thelma&Louise**, Comedy series (1) (5) (180539)
11.35 **The Spirit of Freedom**, Days of Contempt, French writer Bernard-Henri Levy examines how intellectuals dealt with the challenge of fascism during the occupation of France. In French with English subtitles (253859)
12.35am **Dispatches**, A repeat of yesterday's programme about Mark Thatcher's alleged arms dealing in the Middle East (3622331)
1.20 **Film: Paradise Canyon** (1935, b/w) starring John Wayne as a government agent infiltrating a gang of counterfeiters. Directed by Carl Pierson (2557843). Ends at 2.20

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VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
As London except 3.30-3.50 The Young Doctors (580978) 3.50-4.00 First Lady of Cape Horn (5877338) 6.25-7.00 *Angie* News (941572) 10.40 *Journeys* (5867811) 11.00 *Newsnight* (5877338) 11.40 *Prisoner: Cell Block H* (549171) 12.35-1.05 *Horizon* (5828911)
BORDER
As London except 1.15-2.15 *Horizon* and *Other Days* (582248) 3.30-3.50 The Young Doctors (580978) 3.50-4.00 *First Lady of Cape Horn* (5877338) 6.25-7.00 *Angie* News (941572) 10.40 *Journeys* (5867811) 11.00 *Newsnight* (5877338) 11.40 *Prisoner: Cell Block H* (549171) 12.35-1.05 *Horizon* (5828911)
CENTRAL
As London except 1.15-2.15 *Country Practice* (177249) 1.45-2.15 *Home and Away* (5877338) 3.30-3.50 *Family Practice* (582248) 6.25-7.00 *Angie* News (941572) 10.40 *Journeys* (5867811) 11.00 *Newsnight* (5877338) 11.40 *Prisoner: Cell Block H* (549171) 12.35-1.05 *Horizon* (5828911)
HTV WEST
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SPORT

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 25 1992

Football League is ready to set a precedent by electing as president someone not connected with a club

McKeag sure to retain League post

BY LOUISE TAYLOR

THE Football League is expected to elect its first independent president next Monday. Gordon McKeag, who has held the post since January, was elected while a director of Newcastle United. But he is standing for re-election, having broken all his links with the first division club.

Even though McKeag's re-election would represent a radical departure from tradition, League officers are confident that he will be re-appointed.

His present powers and functions will remain unaltered and he will be far more than just a figurehead. His unsalaried appointment will last at least until the League's next annual meeting in the summer, when he is likely to stand again.

Monday's extraordinary meeting at Walsall will also elect a newcomer to the League's board of directors, increasing its size from six to seven. He will represent the North-east regional group — Barnsley, Bradford City, Darlington, Doncaster Rovers, Hartlepool United, Huddersfield Town, Hull City, Newcastle, Rotherham, Scarborough, Sunderland, and York City.

McKeag, 64, a solicitor, is a former chairman of Newcastle. He lost out in a prolonged, and acrimonious, power struggle with Sir John Hall, the present chairman, who is on record as saying he would stand for the vacancy created by McKeag's independent role — which might bring a touch of soap opera to Football League politics. Their



Strictly horizontal. Zeyer, left, of Kaiserslautern, and Jonk, of Ajax, fly through the air with reckless abandon in determined pursuit of the ball in the UEFA Cup match in Amsterdam which the home side won 2-0 with Jonk scoring the second goal in the 87th minute

hostile relationship was highlighted in October when Newcastle refused to provide McKeag with a ticket for the derby game against Sunderland at Roker Park. McKeag finally watched the game after receiving a ticket from Sunderland.

Support for McKeag is so strong among League clubs that, in the unlikely event of him not being elected independent chairman, at least one first division club is pre-

pared to circumvent the problem by making him a director.

John Barnes has been guaranteed a place in Liverpool's starting line-up at home to Crystal Palace on Saturday after his match-winning return as a substitute two days ago.

Barnes, who replaced Ian Rush after only 17 minutes against Queens Park Rangers and set up Ronny Rosenthal's late winner, will make his first full appearance since the Achilles tendon injury that

ruled him out of the European Championships last summer.

The Liverpool manager, Graeme Souness, said yesterday: "It's only games which will get John fit again, so he will start against Palace."

However, good news involving Barnes has been tempered by the loss of Rush. The Welsh international forward looks certain to be rested after a recurring groin injury and could miss not only Saturday's game with Palace but also next Tuesday's Coca-Cola Cup

tie which is against the same opposition.

Bruce Grobbelaar, the Liverpool goalkeeper, is to have a minor elbow operation today, ending all speculation about a possible £500,000 transfer to Oldham Athletic.

Oldham are thought to be ready to take the out-of-favour Chelsea goalkeeper, Dave Beasant, on loan while they search for a full-time replacement for John Hallworth, who has been ruled out for the rest of the season with a wrist

injury. The Celtic manager, Liam Brady, has been ordered to make a personal appearance before the Scottish Football Association next month.

Brady, with the Airdrie coaches, John Binnie and John McVeigh, must explain a dug-out incident during the league match between the clubs last month.

Police intervened during an argument between the two benches after Celtic scored their second goal in a 2-0 win at Parkhead.

Police enquire into incident with Flashman

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

NO SOONER had Stan Flashman, the larger-than-life chairman of Barnet FC, walked away from one trouble spot than he strode straight into another. After receiving a £50,000 fine from the Football League on Monday, police yesterday launched an enquiry into an alleged assault by Flashman on a freelance photographer.

As Flashman left the League disciplinary hearing that imposed the fine for financial irregularities, he was involved in an incident with Paul Welford, representing the Sun newspaper. It was confirmed yesterday that Welford has made a statement to police.

Welford is also preparing to report Flashman to the Football Association and an FA spokesman said yesterday: "Any complaint of that nature would be taken very seriously, with a full investigation." The FA, however, would probably wait to see what action, if any, was taken by police.

Barnet are not alone in running into trouble off the field. It was confirmed yesterday that detectives in Dorset have launched an investiga-

tion into allegations of financial irregularities at the struggling non-league club, Weymouth.

The club's chairman, Paul Cocks, admitted police were looking into the financial dealings of the Beazer Homes League side and added: "Action could be taken within the next few days. The enquiry is a deep and complicated one."

Cash-flow problems have led the GM Vauxhall Conference club, Farnborough, to consider a merger with their Hampshire neighbours, Aldershot Town. Farnborough, who took West Ham United to a replay in the FA Cup last year, are in deep financial trouble with debts of £50,000 and crowds of less than 500 this season.

The Farnborough manager, Ted Pearce, yesterday said he has not ruled out a merger with Aldershot, who have been drawing crowds of more than 2,000 to the Recreation Ground after an impressive start to the season in the Diadora League third division. Aldershot Town 1992 FC was set up by supporters of the original club when it folded earlier this year.

Salako has to contend with new injury worry

JOHN Salako, of Crystal Palace, is to see the American surgeon who saved his career as fears grow that he may face another long lay-off with knee trouble. The winger, who returned this season after ten months on the sidelines with knee ligament damage, will travel back to the United States tomorrow for an urgent check-up.

Salako jarred the same knee in training with England before the 4-0 World Cup defeat of Turkey. The injury ruled him out of Palace's Premier League game with Nottingham Forest last Saturday.

The decision to return to the States was taken after a visit to a specialist this week.

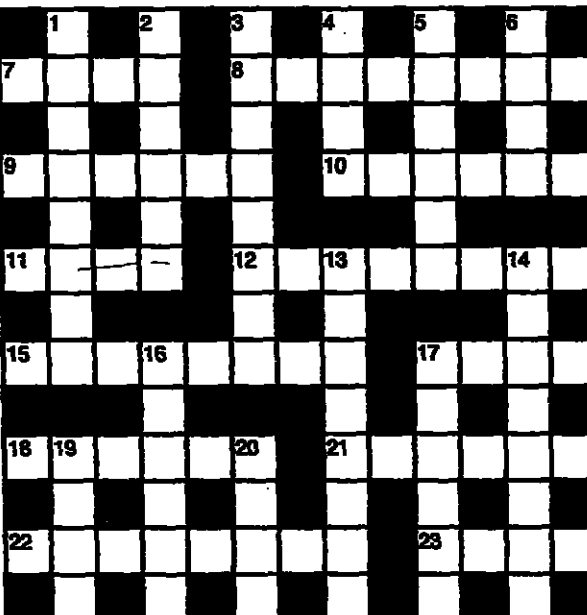
Bobby Gould and his backroom staff are working without contracts to help Coventry City through their finan-

cial worries. The club announced yesterday that it made a £1.4 million trading loss in the year ended last May and it owes the bank £2.2 million in loans and overdraft.

Terry Butcher, a previous manager who was dismissed last January, has taken out a High Court writ for the remaining two years of his contract — an estimated £500,000. Mick Mills and Brian Eastick, Butcher's coaches who also sued the club after being dismissed, have settled out of court.

The Luton Town managing director, David Kohler, is thinking of co-opting a supporter on to the club's board. He made the offer to the Luton Action Committee, which has been organising a campaign to force him to resign.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2955



ACROSS

- 7 Military quarters (4)
8 Of hypothetical interest (8)
9 Ship's radio officer (6)
10 US currency (6)
11 Female deer (4)
12 Male and female inclined (8)
13 Triangular gable (8)
14 Logs vessel (4)
15 Robert - I Claudius author (6)
16 Fresh (6)
17 Indication (8)

DOWN

- 23 Route (4)
1 Sea marsh vegetable (8)
2 Let off (6)
3 Tolerable (8)
4 Celtic poet (4)
5 Automatic response (6)
6 Italian currency (4)
13 Drench (8)
14 Close connection (8)
15 Devise (6)
16 Formula (6)
17 Destroy (4)
20 Tardy (4)

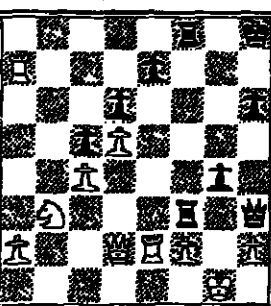
SOLUTIONS TO NO 2954

ACROSS: 1 Bible 4 Paddock 8 Tremulous 9 Era 10 Nod 11 Showpiece 12 Other 13 Every 14 Paymaster 15 Vim 20 Sod 21 Ingenious 22 Dilemma 23 Essay
DOWN: 1 Baton 2 Breadth 3 Equestrianism 4 Photos 5 Disappearance 6 Ouse 7 Knavery 12 Opposed 14 Envious 15 Stigma 17 Yodel 19 Messy

WINNING MOVE

By RAYMOND KEENE, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Kovalchuk - Gagarin, Russia 1992. White, being a piece up, may have entertained hopes of winning the game. If so, Gagarin's next move would have brought him down to earth. What was it?



Solution on page 36

CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software for beginners or experts, (runs on most PCs), telephone Adam Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hours) or call CDS Doncaster on 0302 890 000. Postage free until Christmas (applies UK only).

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

- ATELIER
a. A potter
b. The Canadian spruce
c. A studio
STIRPS
a. Faist thinner
b. Working-class men
c. A flock of vultures
d. Unwillingness
e. Forebode separation

- c. The original ancestor
BONIFACE
a. A beautiful baby
b. The skull
c. An innkeeper
AVULSION
a. A flock of vultures
b. Unwillingness
c. Forebode separation

Juventus overcome absence of Platt

BY LOUISE TAYLOR

ANDREAS Möller and Dino Baggio scored in each half to earn Juventus a virtual passage into the UEFA Cup quarter-finals with a 2-1 win over Sigma Olomouc in Czechoslovakia yesterday. The German international midfielder struck on 23 minutes and Baggio, a defender, doubled the score in the 76th minute of the third round, first leg tie.

Jan Marosi pulled one back for the Czechs in the last minute, but Juventus, who are second in the Italian league, are unlikely to be beaten in the return leg in a fortnight's time and would appear to be as-

sured of a berth in the next round. The Italians were not even at full-strength. Roberto Baggio and David Platt, the England international, were missing with injury, but their absence made little difference.

A number of clubs and players were yesterday reflecting on their good fortune that the Football League has ruled that, sendings off and bookings incurred in the Anglo-Italian Cup would not lead to domestic suspensions.

Tuesday night's round of matches in the international stage resulted in a flurry of red and yellow cards, crowned by a brawl at Newcastle United as they lost 1-0 to Ascoli.

Kevin Keegan, the Newcastle manager, who helped police placate feuding players, said: "You keep thinking you have seen it all in football, but then you see something like this. In the back of your mind, you know that when it is the Italian temperament against the English temperament something is going to happen."

Trouble flared after David Kelly, the United forward, was dismissed seven minutes from time. Keegan said: "I have never seen anything like it in my life. I was trying to get hold of their coach to stop him going back in a casket to Italy. I don't know what was wrong

with him. He had gone completely."

At Upton Park, Trevor Morley, the West Ham United forward, was sent off for head-butting a Reggiana defender, but his side still won 2-0, thanks to two goals from Clive Allen. A Cremonese player was sent off at Ternare Rovers where Rovers lost 2-1.

The organising committee of the Anglo-Italian Cup was meeting in Pisa last night to review the situation.

There was also trouble in the FA Cup at Port Vale where Vale beat Stoke City 3-1 in a first round replay. Stoke supporters responded by causing £5,000 worth of damage.

Floodlit Tests are on the way

FROM RICHARD STREETON IN JOHANNESBURG

TEST cricket under floodlights was an "absolutely certain" development, Sir Colin Cowdrey, the International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman, forecast here yesterday.

Sir Colin was answering questions at a press conference about the popularity of the one-day game as opposed to dwindling attendances at five-day Tests.

Clive Lloyd, the former West Indies captain and ICC referee at the second Test here between South Africa and India, which starts today, agreed with Sir Colin's view.

Lloyd pointed out that even in India and Pakistan, and certainly in the Caribbean, Test crowds were becoming smaller and smaller. "I do not see why cricket cannot change in the direction of floodlit Tests," he said. Lloyd said early evening dew might be a problem for England but possibly a four o'clock start would be a compromise.

All the ICC member boards around the world were addressing themselves to the

public's preference for one-day cricket. Sir Colin continued. He did not wish, however, to pre-empt forthcoming ICC discussions on the issue. "Perhaps the answer lies in some kind of a combined package," he said. "We have to preserve five-day cricket. Not to do so would be a disaster."

He said Test matches had an enormous following through newspapers and other media. The first-class game

in general had to be regarded as the version of the game which made other forms viable. "This whole problem, though, exercises us all constantly."

The enormous success of one-day cricket everywhere was bringing more and more interest and many more countries into cricket each year. The five-day game might not have the same pace but "to chip away at it in any way would be a mistake".

Lloyd said Test cricket could no longer afford to charge exorbitant prices. Ticket costs had to be reduced and he praised South Africa for leading the way by bringing down prices for the Test match today. He hoped others would take similar action shortly.

Dr Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, also commended the Transvaal Cricket Board for making 40 per cent reductions in the original ticket prices.



Cowdrey: traditionalist

Match preview, page 36

Operation for Desert Orchid

DESERT Orchid, one of the most popular racehorses of the modern era, was last night fighting for his life following an operation for a severe bout of colic at Newmarket.

The grey, who retains his celebrity status despite being retired from racing last season, was reported by his owner, Richard Burridge, to be "not at all well."

Burridge said: "He was taken to Newmarket by my father's vet yesterday with a bad case of colic. It got worse, and they discovered that he had a twisted gut."

"He was operated on this morning and they removed part of the lower intestine. He's not at all well, but so far so good. We'll know more in two or three days, but the signs are encouraging."

"He's in the best possible hands, and we're praying for the best. This operation can be successful, and obviously he's a real fighter."

Parrott's accuracy keeps Swail in his chair

By PHIL YATES

JOHN Parrott confirmed that he is the man to beat at the Royal Liver Assurance United Kingdom snooker championship with an impressive display in the opening session of his quarter-final against Joe Swail in Preston yesterday.

Parrott, playing with the self-assurance one would expect from the winner of two tournaments already this season, contained Swail with tight safety and outscored him with a succession of substantial breaks to carry a 6-2 lead

into today's deciding session. A break of 51 gave Swail, the world No. 53 from Belfast, the opening frame before Parrott, the defending UK champion, dominated with runs of 62, 47, 35, 34, 66 and 103, which at five minutes 15 seconds gave him the lead in the race for the event's fastest-century break prize.

Swail totalled only 34 points in this period. He comfortably won the seventh frame but Parrott re-established a four-frame cushion by closing the session with a contribution of 64.

Parrott requires three of the remaining nine frames on the resumption to secure his progress into the semi-finals.

Jimmy White, who in common with Parrott is playing close to the peak of his ability, was also in a healthy position against James Wattana, of Thailand.

White again showed how much victory in last month's Rothmans Grand Prix had restored his confidence by winning five frames from behind to construct a 6-2 interval advantage.

A clearance of 31 to pink

gave White the first frame. A spectacular double on the blue secured the second and a late 57, after Wattana had missed a straightforward red when 43-16 ahead in the sixth, made it 5-1.

Wattana, who has won ten of his previous 15 meetings with White, compiled a break of 110 in the fifth frame and a 70 in the seventh but when White stole the last of the afternoon on the pink, the Thai was facing an uphill battle.

CHARTER-PAL SCORES: J Parrott 62-47-35-34-66-103-64 (62) beats J Swail (34) 6-2. J White 57-43-16-31-70-70-31 (57) beats J Wattana (110) 6-2.

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